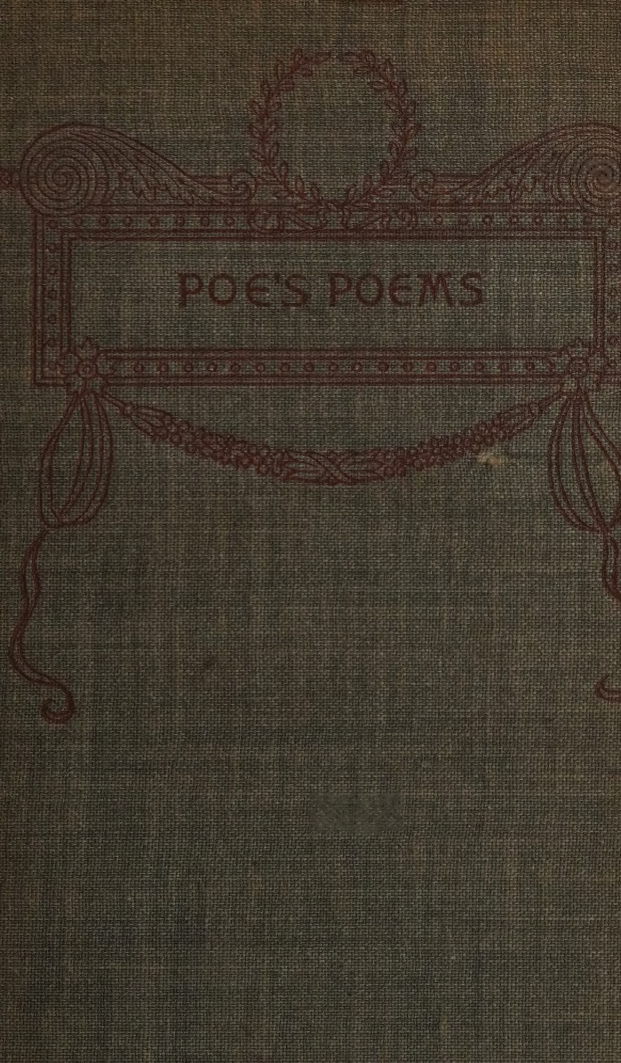
POE'S POEMS

# THE STORY OF "THE BELLS."

## How and Where Edgar Allan Poe Wrote the Poem.

It was in the winter of 1849 that a young lawyer, who had recently been admitted to the bar in Baltimore, was sitting late one evening before his cheerful fire in his office indulging in a reverie, writes Raphael S. Payne in the Chicago Times, when he was suddenly aroused from dreamland by a loud knock at his front door. The lawyer arose and went to the door. As he opened it and looked out he observed a gentleman wildly gesticulating, who appeared to be talking to himself. "Did you knock?" inquired the lawyer.

"Yes, sir," was the reply, in a pleasant tone, "and I trust you will pardon me for disturbing you at so late an hour. I should not have done so had not some thoughts come to me as I was passing along which I very much desired to put upon paper. Seeing your light, I ventured to obtain permission to enter your office, where I might, through your kindness, be allowed some paper on which to jot them down."

"Certainly; you are quite at liberty to walk in and make yourself at home," said the lawyer.

The stranger followed, and the lawyer, placing some writing material at his disposal, at the same time offering him a seat at the table, remarked that, if he would not deem it impolite, he would retire to his private apartment for the night, since, being a bachelor, he kept bachelor's quarters adjoining,

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"But you are very welcome to remain as long as you want to," added the lawyer, and bade him good-night.

Early next morning the lawyer awoke and his first thought being of the stranger he hastily dressed himself and opened the door which led to his office. There, to his great astonishment, he beheld his guest of the previous night still sitting there where he had left him hours before, his head resting on the table and he fast asleep. But the slight noise awakened the stranger, who, quickly rising, apologized most profusely for remaining so long, remarking that being exceedingly fatigued the night before he had unintentionally fallen asleep. His friend would pardon him, perhaps; and extending his hand toward the lawyer he turned to go. "But you have neglected to take your manuscript," said the lawyer, stepping forward to the table and taking up several sheets of paper covered with the most beautiful chirography.

"Oh, no, sir," replied the stranger smiling. "I have left that for you in token of your great kindness to me. I have a copy of what I have written. Good morning."

The lawyer examined the manuscript and found it to be a lyric of captivating beauty entitled simply "The Bells." But his surprise was deepened when, at the end of the singular poem, he read the author's name—Edgar Allan Poe.

Poe was at this time on his way from Richmond to Philadelphia, where his wedding was soon to take place, and while stopping in Baltimore he fell into the company of convivial

spirits, which resulted in his indulging in a terrible and prolonged debauch. Recovering from his spree, with nerves unstrung, the pangs of remorse fixed upon his conscience, and the thought of his lady love haunting him, and the following stanzas are the original poems as written on that occasion, he having changed and subsequently added to it:

The bells! hear the bells!
The merry wedding-bells!
How fairy-like a melody that swells
From the silvery tinkling cells
Of the bells—bells—bells!
Of the bells!

The bells! Oh, the bells!
The heavy iron bells!
Hear the tolling of the bells!
Hear the knells!
How horrible a melody there floats
From their throats—
From their deep-toned throats!
How I shudder at the notes
From the melancholy throats
Of the bells—bells—bells!
Of the bells!

The part played by a handkerchief in the life of the unfortunate Edgar Allan Poe is perhaps already familiar. During the brief period in which he was engaged to be married he was discovered by her whom, despite his frailty, he held in such sacred tenderness, lying intoxicated in the street. Lest others should recognize him—so runs the story—she threw her handkerchief over his face. Futile effort to hide one of that multitude of sins which Charity's cloak alone can cover! When he was capable of realizing his situation he became a prey to that torture and despair that abound in the Raven.

And my soul, from out the shadow
That lies floating on the floor, shall be lifted
Never more!

THE COMPLETE

# POETICAL WORKS

OF

# EDGAR ALLAN POE

(see p. 276)

*WITH MEMOIR BY*

"an earnest & intelligent Englishman"

J. H. INGRAM

Poe was a handsome man with wonderful eyes. He was worshiped in his home, particularly by his wife's mother, who writes: "I always sat up with him when he was writing, and gave him a cup of hot coffee every hour or two. At home he was simple, and affectionate as a child, and durin all the years he lived with me I do not remember a single night tha' he failed to come to me and kiss his 'mother' before going to bed."

Henry Sartain, a son of the famous engraver, John Sartain, tells how in 1851 Poe's poem, "The Bells," was first published in Sartain's Magazine. "Poe," he says, "came into the office one day, and handing father a stanza in manuscript asked him what he thought of it. Father looked it over and said he thought it pretty good. 'Is it worth $5?' asked Poe. Father said he thought it was, and paid him the money. The poem was the first stanza of 'The Bells.' A week or so later Poe again sauntered into the office, with the remark: 'Well, John, I see you haven't printed my poem yet.' Father replied that he had not because of lack of space. 'Well, I've got another stanza here. Will you let me have a five on it?' The man looked so utterly wretched that father paid him the money and took the stanza. Still another installment of two additional stanzas followed within a month, and then it was that the poem was first printed." Ind "Aug 2-94

At the very last, toward that pitiful end of which it is all too-customary to speak with harsh censoriousness or with vulgar flippancy, Mr. Sartain was the confidante of the poor poet's mad fancies, but these were not the immediate results of liquor, but its ultimate penalties, for Mr. Sartain gives his word and testimony that Poe had forsworn drink and that, at the hospital where he died, when liquor was offered him, he answered the physician, "Sir, if I thought its potency would transport me to the Elysian bowers of the undiscovered spirit world, I would not take it."

Poe wrote the most beautiful poetry that has ever been written in America. It is like some of those great pictures of the Venetians, whose sudden loveliness takes your breath away.

# CONTENTS.


PAGE.

Memoir,..... 5
N. P. Willis on the Death of Poe,..... 115

POEMS AND ESSAYS:

The Poetic Principle,..... 127
Author's Preface to the Poems,..... 159
The Raven,..... 161
Lenore,..... 168
Hymn,..... 170
A Valentine,..... 170
The Coliseum,..... 172
To Helen,..... 174
To ——— ———,..... 176
Ulalume,..... 178
The Bells,..... 181
An Enigma,..... 185
Annabel Lee,..... 186
To my Mother,..... 188
The Haunted Palace,..... 188
The Conqueror Worm,..... 190
To F———S S. O———D,..... 192
To One in Paradise,..... 192
The Valley of Unrest,..... 193
The City in the Sea,..... 194
The Sleeper,..... 196
Silence,..... 198
A Dream within a Dream,..... 199
Dreamland,..... 200
To Zante,..... 202

PAGE.

Eulalie,..... 202
Eldorado,..... 204
Israfel,..... 205
For Annie,..... 207
To ——,..... 210
Bridal Ballad,..... 211
To F——,..... 212
Scenes from "Politian,"..... 213

POEMS WRITTEN IN YOUTH:

Sonnet—to Science,..... 239
Al Aaraaf,..... 240
To the River ——,..... 256
Tamerlane,..... 259
To ——,..... 267
A Dream,..... 267
Romance,..... 268
Fairy-Land,..... 269
The Lake—To ——,..... 271
Song,..... 272
To M. L. S——,..... 273
Spirits of the Dead,..... 273
To Helen,..... 275
Alone,..... 275

In "Fairyland" alone, among his earliest poems is there a clear & convincing glimpse of Poe's genius" Hamilton of Mobile "The Raven" & "The Bells" has no place in a consideration of such perfection of sense & sound as a lines "To Helen"; "City in a sea" & "Israfel" a 1st of these is so slight in thot that its charm will hardly bear analysis; a 2nd is a piece of description wh shows

one is not only a most tender & beautiful expression of his genius, but in regard to pure song, it is one of the finest in american poetry." H. W. H.

## MEMOIR.

EDGAR ALLAN POE was born in Boston, on the 19th of January, 1809. He was named Allan after a wealthy and intimate friend of the family, and when both his parents died his godfather, who, although long married, was childless, adopted the little orphan, then only six years old. Even at this early age Poe was noted for his precocity as well as for his beauty, and Mr. Allan appears to have been extremely proud of his youthful protege, and to have treated him in many respects as his own son. The boy is stated to have been made quite a show-child of by his adopted father; a tenacious memory and a musical ear, we are informed, enabling him to learn by rote, and declaim to the evening visitors assembled at Mr. Allan's house, the finest passages of English poetry with great effect. "The justness of his emphasis, and his evident appreciation of the poems he recited," we learn, made a striking impression upon his audience, "while every heart was won by the ingenuous simplicity and agreeable manner of the pretty little elocutionist." Gratifying as these exhibitions may have been to his godfather's vanity, the probable consequence of such a system of re-

curring excitements upon the boy's morbidly nervous organization could scarcely fail to be disastrous. Indeed, in after years, the poet bitterly bewailed the pernicious effects of his childhood's misdirected aims. "I am," he but too truthfully declared, "the descendant of a race whose imaginative and easily excitable temperament has at all times rendered them remarkable, and in my earliest infancy I gave evidence of having fully inherited the family character. As I advanced in years it was more strongly developed, becoming, for many reasons, a cause of serious disquietude to my friends, and of positive injury to myself; . . . my voice was a household law, and, at an age when few children have abandoned their leading-strings, I was left to the guidance of my own will, and became, in all but name, the master of my own actions."

In 1816, the Allans having to visit England on matters connected with the disposal of some property there, brought their adopted son with them, and after taking him on a tour through England and Scotland with them, left him at the Manor-House School in Church Street, Stoke-Newington. The school belonged to a Rev. Dr. Bransby, who is so quaintly described in "William Wilson," one of Poe's finest stories. At the time of Poe's residence the school grounds occupied a large area, but of late years they have been greatly circumscribed in extent. The description of the place, and the account of his life there, Poe is stated

to have declared were autobiographically portrayed in this tale; if so, a portion of "William Wilson's" oft-quoted reminiscences must be relegated to the exaggerated memories of childhood. In some respects the description of the "large, rambling Elizabethan house" corresponds more closely to the fine old manorial residence facing the school, but in others the place is described with almost pre-Raphaelite minuteness. The picture of Stoke-Newington as it was when Poe resided there is also unusually accurate in its details. Friendless and orphaned though he was, it was probably the happiest portion of his life that the future poet passed in this congenial spot, this "misty-looking village of England, where were a vast number of gigantic and gnarled trees, and where all the houses were excessively ancient." "In truth," adds Poe, "it was a dream-like and spirit-soothing place, that venerable old town," and it is not strange that the boy's plastic mind should have received, and retained indelibly imprinted upon it the impression of, and in after years recall, in fancy, "the refreshing chillness of its deeply shadowed avenues, inhale the fragrance of its thousand shrubberies, and thrill anew with undefinable delight, at the deep hollow note of the church-bell, breaking each hour with sudden and sullen roar, upon the stillness of the dusky atmosphere in which the fretted Gothic steeple lay imbedded and asleep."

Here, in this dreamy place, Edgar Poe spent

from four to five years of his existence, and, notwithstanding the monotony of school life, was doubtless fully justified in looking back upon the days passed in that venerable academy with pleasurable feelings. "The teeming brain of childhood," to quote his own words, "requires no external world of incident to occupy or amuse it. . . . The morning's awakening, the nightly summons to bed, the connings, the recitations, the periodical half-holidays and perambulations, the play-ground, with its broils, its pastimes, its intrigues;—these, by a mental sorcery long forgotten, were made to involve a wilderness of sensation, a world of rich incident, a universe of varied emotion, of excitement the most passionate and spirit-stirring. *Oh, le bon temps, que ce siecle de fer!*'"

The house was, indeed still is, as Poe described it, "old and irregular." "The grounds," he continues, "were extensive, and a high and solid brick wall, topped with a bed of mortar and broken glass, encompassed the whole. This prison-like rampart formed the limit of our domain; beyond it we saw but thrice a week—once every Saturday afternoon, when, attended by two ushers, we were permitted to take brief walks in a body through some of the neighboring fields, and twice during Sunday, when we were paraded in the same formal manner to the morning and evening services in the one church of the village. . . At an angle of the ponderous wall frowned a more ponder-

ous gate. It was rivetted and studded with iron bolts, and surmounted with jagged iron spikes. What impressions of deep awe did it inspire! . . . The extensive enclosure was irregular in form, having many capricious recesses. Of these, three or four of the largest constituted the play-ground. It was level, and covered with fine, hard gravel. I well remember it had no trees, nor benches, nor anything similar, within it. Of course it was in the rear of the house. In front lay a small parterre, planted with box and other shrubs, but through this sacred division we passed only upon rare occasions indeed—such as a first advent to school, or final departure thence, or perhaps when a parent or friend having called for us we joyfully took our way home for the Christmas or Midsummer holidays."

"The ardor, the enthusiasm, and the imperiousness," which is declared to have rendered the *soi-disant* "William Wilson" a marked character amongst his school-mates, so that by slow but natural gradations he obtained an ascendency over all not greatly older than himself, may be safely assumed to represent Poe's own character, even at this early epoch of his life, as it is invariably found to represent it from first to last. Undoubtedly it was in this "venerably academy" that our poet acquired the groundwork of that curious superstructure of classic lore which in after years was one of the chief ornaments of his weird and wonderful works. To the lustrum

of his life spent in England, Edgar Poe was probably far more scholastically indebted than the world can or will ever know.

In 1821, the lad was recalled home, and soon afterward was placed by his adopted parents at an academy in Richmond, Virginia. Mr. Allan would seem to have been very proud of his handsome and precocious godson, and always to have been willing to afford him any amount of education procurable; but of parental love, of that deep sympathy for which the poor orphan yearned, he seems to have been utterly devoid. Not but what the imperious little fellow was indulged in what money could purchase, but the petting and spoiling which he still appears to have received was not of that kind to touch his tender heart. Throughout life a morbid sensitiveness to affection was one of his most distinguishing traits, and this it was that frequently drove him to seek in the society of dumb creatures that love which was denied him, or which *he sometimes believed* denied him, by human beings. There is a paragraph in his terrible tale of "The Black Cat," which those who were intimately acquainted with Poe will at once recognize the autobiographical fidelity of. "From my infancy," he remarks, "I was noted for the docility and humanity of my disposition. My tenderness of heart was even so conspicuous as to make me the jest of my companions. I was especially fond of animals, and was indulged by my parents with a great variety

of pets. With these I spent most of my time, and never was so happy as when feeding and caressing them. This peculiarity of character grew with my growth, and in my manhood I derived from it one of my principal sources of pleasure. To those who have cherished an affection for a faithful and sagacious dog, I need hardly be at the trouble of explaining the nature or the intensity of the gratification thus derivable. There is something in the unselfish and self-sacrificing love of a brute which goes directly to the heart of him who has had frequent occasion to test the paltry friendship and gossamer fidelity of mere *man*."

In her before quoted little book Mrs. Whitman relates a well-authenticated and characteristic anecdote of Poe when he was studying at the Richmond academy, and whilst it very strikingly illustrates the almost Quixotic constancy of his attachments—his gratitude for kindness—it also but too clearly demonstrates how little sympathy and affection the young orphan received from his adopted parents. "He one day accompanied a schoolmate to his home," relates Mrs. Whitman, "where he saw for the first time Mrs. H—— S——; * the mother of his young friend. This lady, on entering the room, took his hand and spoke some gentle and gracious words of welcome which so penetrated the sensitive heart of the orphan boy as to deprive him of the power of

* Mrs. Helen Stannard was the name of this lady.

speech, and for a time almost of consciousness itself. He returned home in a dream, with but one thought, one hope in life—to hear again the sweet and gracious words that had made the desolate world so beautiful to him, and filled his lonely heart with the oppression of a new joy. This lady afterward became the confident of all his boyish sorrows, and hers was the one redeeming influence that saved and guided him in the earlier days of his turbulent and passionate youth." But, alas for the poor lad, this lady was herself overwhelmed with fearful and peculiar sorrows, and at the very moment when her guiding voice was most needed, she died. But when she was entombed in the neighboring cemetery, her poor boyish admirer could not endure the thought of her lying there lonely and forsaken in her vaulted home, and for months after her decease, like his contemporary Petöfi, the great Hungarian poet, at the grave of his girl-love Etelka, Poe would go nightly to visit the tomb of his revered friend, and "when the nights were very dreary and cold, when the autumnal rains fell, and the winds wailed mournfully over the graves, he lingered longest and came away most regretfully."

For years, if not for life, the memory of this unfortunate lady tinged all his fancies and filled his mind with saddening things. In a letter written within a twelve-month of his death to the truest friend, in all probability, of his "lonesome latter years," Poe broke through

his usual reticence as to his early life, and confessed that his exquisite stanzas, "Helen, thy beauty is to me," were inspired by the memory of this lady, by "the one idolatrous and purely ideal love" of his tempest-tossed boyhood. In the earliest versions of his boyhood's poems the name Helen frequently recurs, and it was undoubtedly to her that he inscribed "The Pæan," a juvenile poem, which he subsequently greatly improved both in rhythm and expression, and republished under the musical name of "Lenore." The description which Poe afterward gave to a friend of the fantasies that haunted his brain during his desolate vigils in the cemetery, the nameless fears and indescribable phantasms,

> "Flapping from out their Condor wings
> Invisible Woe!"

she compares to those which overwhelmed De Quincey at the burial of his sweet sister and playmate. We linger somewhat over this little-known epoch of Poe's story, because we are perfectly convinced that Mrs. Whitman has indeed found "a key to much that seems strange and abnormal in the poet's after life, in those solitary churchyard vigils with all their associated memories." There can indeed be no doubt that those who would seek the clue to the psychological phenomena of his strange existence, that intellect—as Poe himself said—which would try to reduce his "phantasm to the commonplace," must know

and even study this phase of his being. The mind which could so steadfastly trace, step by step, the terrible stages of *sentence after death*, as Edgar Poe's does in his weird "Colloquy of Monos and Una," must, indeed, have been one that frequently had sought to wrest from the charnel-house its earthy secrets.

Returning to the more commonplace records of his history, the future poet is described to us at this period of his life as remarkable for his general cleverness, his feats of activity, his wayward temper, his extreme personal beauty, and his power of extemporaneous tale-telling, and, even at this early stage, as a great classical scholar, and as well versed in mathematics, botany, and other branches of the natural sciences. It is but just that we should refer to Griswold's account of his epoch in the life of Edgar Poe, as that biographist's mendacity is not known to all.

"In 1822," says Griswold, "Poe returned to the United States, and after passing a *few months* at an academy in Richmond, he entered the university at Charlottesville, where he led a very dissipated life; the manners which then prevailed there were extremly dissolute, and he was known as the wildest and most reckless student of his class; . . . he would have graduated with the highest honors had not his gambling, intemperance, and *other vices* induced his explusion from the university." The mere fact that, according to Griswold's dates, Poe would only have been at this time

in the eleventh or twelfth year of his age, is sufficient to induce doubt as to the correctness of his accusations, but, fortunately for the fair fame of the accused, indisputable evidence as to the entire untruth of Griswold's story has been procured. On May 22, 1860, Dr. Stephen Maupin, president of the University of Virginia, in answer to various inquiries made of him relative to Edgar Poe's career at Charlottesville, procured a statement from Mr. William Wertenbaker, secretary of the Faculty, which he further endorsed with the remark that "Mr. Wertenbaker's statement is worthy of entire confidence." "I may add," he continues, "that there is nothing on the Faculty records to the prejudice of Mr. Poe. He appears to have been a successful student, having obtained distinctions in *Latin* and *French* at the closing examinations of 1826. He never graduated here, no provision for conferring degrees of any kind having been made at the time he was a student here." Dr. Maupin's letter is followed by the said statement, and a most interesting as well as conclusive document it is. Says Mr. Wertenbaker:

"Edgar A. Poe was a student of the University of Virginia during the second session, which commenced February 1, 1826, and terminated December 15th of the same year. He signed the matriculation book on the 14th of February, and remained in good standing as a student till the session closed. He was born on the 19th of February, 1809 being a little under seventeen when he entered the institution. He belonged to the schools of ancient and modern languages, and as I was myself a

member of the latter, I can testify that he was tolerably regular in attendance, and a very successful student, having obtained distinction in it at the final examination, the highest honor a student could then obtain, the present regulation in regard to degrees not having been at the time adopted. On one occasion Professor Blatterman requested his *Italian* class to render into English verse a portion of the lesson in Tasso, assigned for the next lecture. Mr. Poe was the only one who complied with the request. He was highly complimented by the Professor for his performance.

"Although I had a passing acquaintance with Mr. Poe from an early period of the session, it was not until near its close that I had any social intercourse with him. After spending an evening together at a private house, he invited me to his room. It was a cold night in December, and his fire having gone nearly out, by the aid of some candle ends and the wreck of a table, he soon rekindled it, and by its comfortable blaze I spent a very pleasant hour with him. On this occasion he spoke with regret of the amount of money he had wasted, and the debts he had contracted. In a biographical sketch of Mr. Poe, I have seen it stated that he was at one time expelled from the university, but that he afterward returned and graduated with the highest honors. This is entirely a mistake. He spent but one session at the university, and *at no time did he fall under the censure of the Faculty.* He was not at that time addicted to drinking, but had an ungovernable passion for card-playing. Mr. Poe was several years older than his biographer represents him. His age, I have no doubt, was correctly entered on the matriculation book."

So much for the story started, or at all events promulgated by Griswold, of Edgar Poe's expulsion from the university. This writer admits that Poe was noted at this time for feats of hardihood, strength, and activity, and recounts—but with his usual exaggeration—an aquatic performance of the lad's. On a

Poe confessed to gaming debts of about $2000
& these were the reasons for his leaving & he

hot day of June, according to Poe's own statement, he swam from Ludlum's wharf to Warwick, a distance of six miles, against a strong tide; and when the truth of the assertion was publicly questioned, he obtained a certification of the fact from several companions, including his dear classmate Robert Stannard. This document, moreover, declares that "Mr. Poe did not seem at all fatigued, and walked back to Richmond immediately after the feat, which was undertaken for a wager." Our poet had, indeed, no little confidence in his swimming powers, and asserted that, on a favorable day, he believed he could swim the English Channel from Dover to Calais.

In 1827, aroused by the heroic efforts the Greeks were making to throw off the yoke of their Turkish oppressors, and, doubtless, emulous of Byron, whose example had excited the chivalric boys of both continents, Edgar Poe and an acquaintance, Ebenezer Burling, determined to start for Greece and offer their aid to the insurgents. Either Mr. Burling's heart failed, or parental authority was too strong for *him*, for he stayed at home, whilst the embryo poet, doubtless in headstrong opposition to the wishes of his adopted parents, started alone for Europe. Poe was absent for more than a year, but the adventures of his journey have never been told; he seems to have been very reticent upon the subject, and to have left uncontradicted the various stories invented, and even published during his lifetime to

lan [his foster-father] was shocked and incensed at the extent his dishonorable 'debts of honor'—which he at first refused to sider, but finally settled—and determined to put his extrava-

account for the interregnum in his history. That he reached England is probable, but whether he ever beheld, save in his "mind's-eye," the remains of

> "The glory that *was* Greece
> And the grandeur that *was* Rome,"

is still uncertain; there are a few slight allusions scattered amid his writings to the scenery of both Greece and Italy, but it is impossible to found anything reliable upon such *data*. The story as to his having arrived at St. Petersburg, and got involved in difficulties that necessitated ministerial aid to extricate him, must be given up, as must also that founded upon the suggestion made by the anonymous author of a scurrilous paper which appeared in the *Southern Literary Messenger*, that Poe, when in London, formed the acquaintance of Leigh Hunt and Theodore Hook, and lived like "that class of men, . . . dragging out a precarious existence in garrets, doing drudgery work, writing for the great presses and for the reviews, whose world-wide celebrity has been the fruit of such men's labor."

In 1829 Edgar Poe returned home, if Mr. Allan's residence may so be termed. He reached Richmond, Virginia, we have been informed, early in March, but too late to take a last farewell of his adopted mother, she having died on the 27th of February, and her funeral having taken place the very day before Poe's return. Mrs. Allan had probably ex-

ercised a conciliatory influence in the household, where, we hear, it was frequently needed, and the poor lad, who in after life invariably spoke well of this lady, doubtless soon felt the effects of her loss. Mr. Allen does not appear to have manifested any great pleasure at the prodigal's return, but when Poe expressed his willingness to devote himself to the military profession, he exercised his influence and obtained a nomination for him to a scholarship in the military academy at West Point. As, according to the rules of that institution, appointments are not given to candidates after they have attained their twenty-first birthday, the young author, for such he now was, was only just in time to secure his nomination. Meanwhile Poe had published a little volume of poems, his first known essay in literature, under the title of "Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane, and other poems." * Lowell and others of the poet's reviewers speak of an earlier edition of this book as published in 1827, and from it the delicate little lyric "To Helen" is professedly extracted. This 1827 volume is also stated to have received very flattering notice from the veteran author, John Neal, but it has disappeared without leaving any trace, and the edition of 1829, which was printed for private circulation only, is the earliest discoverable vestige of Poe's literary powers.

Reverting to the military academy, the

* Hatch and Dunning: Baltimore, 1829, 81 pp.

records show that Poe was admitted into that institution as a cadet on the 1st of July, 1830, He is declared to have entered upon his new mode of living with customary energy, but very speedily discovered how totally unsuited to him now was the strict discipline and monotonous training of such a place as West Point. The wayward and erratic course of existence to which he had been accustomed, together with his having been for so long a time sole master of his own actions, rendered it impossible for him to submit to the galling restraints of this institution. A fellow-cadet with him at the academy informs us of "his utter inefficiency and state of abstractedness at that place. He could not, or would not," he remarks, "follow its mathematical requirements. His mind was off from the matter-of-fact routine of the drill, which in such a case as his, seemed practical joking on some ethereal visionary expedition. He was marked," adds our informant, "for an early death." This institution was utterly unsuitable for one of Poe's temperament and experience; it was a repetition of the old story of Pegasus at the plow, and the climax was, as could easily have been foreseen, that, on the 7th of January, 1831, he was tried by a general court-martial "for various neglects of duty and disobedience of orders," to which he could but plead guilty, and, he was, on the subsequent 6th of March, "dismissed the service of the United States!"

In 1831, whilst still cadet, and all unawed

by the sentence impending, he published an enlarged collection of his boyish rhymes under the title of "POEMS by Edgar A. Poe." * This volume, garnished with a quotation from Rochefoucauld, "*Tout le monde a raison*," and which, like its predecessors, was for private circulation, was dedicated to "the United States Corps of Cadets," a dedication which appears to have drawn upon its unfortunate author the ridicule of his fellow-students. A fellow-cadet, a General Cullum, alluding to the contents of this little volume, says: "These verses were the source of great merriment with us boys, who considered the author cracked and the verses ridiculous doggerel." Happily for literature, the opinion of "us boys" did not carry much weight, and Poe continued to write "verses" quite regardless of West Point and its judgments. This little book is most interesting not only on account of its cleverly written prefatory letter of seventeen pages, addressed to a certain mythical "B——," but also from the fact that it contains a large quantity of verse suppressed in later editions of Poe's works. The prose is followed by a poetical introduction of sixty-six lines, a portion of which, under the title of "Romance," is included in the general collection of "Poems written in Youth." Many of the omitted portions of this volume have a strange biographical interest for those conversant with the true story of Edgar Poe's life;

* E. Bliss, New York, 1831, 124 pp. 12mo.

to them they hint of something more than mere rhymes. The omissions from are as happy as the additions to those boyish poems. No regard for the relics of his youth withheld Edgar Poe in after life from pruning away the excrescences of his juvenile verse; the critic's unswerving hand clipped or molded all into artistic unity.

Upon leaving West Point, Poe returned to Mr. Allan's residence at Richmond, and appears to have remained there some time on sufferance. Soon after his return home he became attached to Miss Royster, and was ultimately, it is believed, engaged to her. Mr. Allan, why it is not known, was violently opposed to the match, and without his pecuniary aid, matrimony was out of the question, as Poe was entirely dependent upon him. A violent quarrel took place between the old man and his adopted son, and Poe, unable to submit calmly to the course of events, again left home, this time with the intention of proceeding to Poland, to expend his energies in aiding the Poles in their struggles against Russia. How far he got is not known, but it is supposed that he did not leave America, having been stopped by the intelligence that, on the 6th of September, Warsaw had fallen, carrying with it the last hopes of the Polish insurgents. In the meanwhile, as if to widen the estrangement at home, Mr. Allan had taken unto himself a young wife—"the beautiful Miss Paterson" whilst Miss Royster, forgetful of her faith, was married to a wealthy

man, a Mr. Shelton. Once more aimless, and probably resourceless, the chivalric young poet again sought his native province. Whether he returned to the home that was home no more is uncertain, but, from what is known of his proud spirit, it seems unlikely; if he did, however, his stay was of short duration, and his godfather's second wife having given birth to a son was the death-blow to Poe's prospects of succeeding to the property.

Bankrupt in nearly everything, the unfortunate poet now turned to literature as a means of obtaining subsistence, but he found the waters of Helicon were anything but Pactolian. Where he wandered, and what he did, for nearly two years, still remains, an unraveled mystery, but it is alleged that some of his finest stories were written during this epoch, and, although accepted and published by magazine editors, were scarcely ever paid for. In 1833 he is heard of in Baltimore competing for prizes offered by the proprietor of the *Saturday Visitor* for the best prose story and the best poem. Here, then, was an opportunity of deferring, for a while at least, the starvation which was not far off. For the competition, Poe selected and sent in six of his stories, and his poem of "The Coliseum." Some well-known literary men consented to adjudicate upon the mass of papers received, and after a careful consideration of the various contributions, decided unanimously that Poe, who was unknown to them, was entitled to both premiums.

Not contented with this award, the adjudicators even went out of their way to draw up and publish the following flattering critique on the merits of the writings submitted by Poe :—

"Amongst the prose articles were many of various and distinguished merit, but the singular force and beauty of those sent by the author of 'the Tales of the Folio Club,' leave us no room for hesitation in that department. We have accordingly awarded the premium to a tale entitled the 'MS. found in a bottle.' It would hardly be doing justice to the writer of this collection to say that the tale we have chosen is the best of the six offered by him. We cannot refrain from saying that the author owes it to his own reputation, as well as to the gratification of the community to publish the entire volume ('Tales of the Folio Club'). These tales are eminently distinguished by a wild, vigorous, and poetical imagination, a rich style, a fertile invention, and varied and curious learning.

"JOHN P. KENNEDY,
"J. H. B. LATROBE, and
"JAMES H. MILLER."

Griswold tells the story of the award thus :—

"Such matters are usually disposed of in a very off-hand way. Committees to award literary prizes drink to the payer's health in good wines over unexamined MSS., which they submit to the discretion of publishers, with permission to use their names in such a way as to promote the publisher's advantage. So, perhaps, it would have been in this case, but that one of the committee taking up a little book remarkably beautiful and distinct in calligraphy, was tempted to read several pages; and becoming interested, he summoned the attention of the company to the half-dozen compositions it contained. It was unanimously decided that the prizes should be paid to 'the first of the geniuses who had written legibly.' Not another MS. was unfolded.

Immediately the 'confidential envelope' was opened, and the successful competitor was found to bear the scarcely known name of Poe."

The above report, which was published on the 12th of October, 1833, is of itself a complete disproof of Griswold's dishonoring accusation against the committee of having awarded the prizes to Poe because of his beautiful handwriting, without looking at a single MS. of any other competitor. When the story, it may be added, was brought to the notice of Mr. Latrobe and the honorable John P. Kennedy, the two surviving adjudicators, they at once denied its truth.

Mr. Kennedy, the well-known author, was so interested in the successful but unknown competitor, that he invited him to his house, and Poe's response, written in his usual beautiful and distinct caligraphy, proves the depth of misery to which he had sunk. How his heart bled to pen these lines few can probably imagine :—

"Your invitation to dinner has wounded me to the quick. I cannot come for reasons of the most humiliating nature—my personal appearance. You may imagine my mortification in making this disclosure to you, but it is necessary."

Urged by the noblest feelings, Mr. Kennedy at once sought out the unfortunate youth, and found him, as he declares, almost starving. Poe's wretched condition inspired the unselfish author with pity, as his genius did with ad-

miration, and from henceforth he became his firm friend. It is interesting to learn that to the last Poe retained his benefactor's friendship and respect, as Mr. Kennedy acknowledged when informed of the poet's decease; and no better disproof of the calumnies heaped by Griswold on the dead man's head could be given, than by repeating the testimonies of all those with whom Poe lived and labored. So far from contenting himself with mere courtesies, Mr. Kennedy assisted his new *portégé* to re-establish himself in the outward garb of respectability, and in many respects treated him more like a dear relative than a chance acquaintance. In his diary he records, "I gave him clothing, free access to my table, and the use of a horse for exercise whenever he chose; in fact, brought him up from the very verge of despair." Aided by such a friend, Poe's affairs could not but mend.

In the spring of 1834 Mr. Allan died, and if his god-son still retained any expectations of inheriting any portion of his wealth he was at last undeceived, as, in the language of Griswold, "not a mill was bequeathed to Poe." In August of this same year, a Mr. White, an energetic and accomplished man, in opposition to the advice of his friends, commenced the publication of the *Southern Literary Messenger*, in Richmond, Virginia. This magazine was a very daring speculation at such a time and place, and but for a fortunate accident might have placed its promoter completely

*hors de combat.* Amongst the well-known writers whose aid he solicited was Mr. Kennedy, and he, being fully engaged, advised Poe to send something. Our poet did so, and Mr. White, greatly pleased with his contributions, spoke of them in very flattering terms, in March, 1835, publishing "Berenice." Henceforth Poe became a regular monthly contributor to the *Messenger*. Mr. Kennedy had now had a year and a half's experience of Poe, without finding anything in his conduct to alter the good opinion he had formed of him, and the following letter is quoted by Griswold as having been written at this period by Mr. Kennedy to Mr. White. As it is apparently authentic, we quote it:—

"BALTIMORE, April 13, 1835.

"DEAR SIR—Poe did right in referring to me. He is very clever with his pen—classical and scholarlike. He wants experience and direction, but I have no doubt he can be made very useful to you. And, poor fellow! he is *very* poor. I told him to write something for every number of your magazine, and that you might find it to your advantage to give him some permanent employ. He has a volume of very bizarre tales in the hands of ——, in Philadelphia, who for a year past has been promising to publish them. This young fellow is highly imaginative, and a little given to the terrific. He is at work upon a tragedy, but I have turned him to drudging upon whatever may make money, and I have no doubt you and he will find your account in each other."

Mr. White undoubtedly found his "account" in his new contributor, and every month called the attention of his readers to the beauties of the current tale by the young author.

In the June number of the magazine appeared Poe's tale of "Hans Pfaall," and three weeks later there appeared in the *New York Sun* Mr. Locke's famous "Moon Hoax" story. Griswold alludes to the former being "in some respects very similar to Mr. Locke's celebrated account," in a way to make his readers believe our poet the copier instead of the copied. Poe's reputation was now increasing so rapidly that Mr. White became desirous of retaining his services exclusively for his magazine, and having sounded his contributor, and found him only too willing, engaged him to assist in the editorial duties of the *Messenger* at a salary of about one hundred guineas (520 dollars) per annum. In consequence of this appointment Poe at once removed from Baltimore to Richmond, Virginia, where the magazine was published. Griswold, in order to suit dates to one of his allegations against Poe, states that he was appointed editor of the *Messenger* in May, whereas he only became assistant editor in September, and did not assume the full control of the publication until December, 1835. The unfavorable notice of Mr. Laughton Osborne's "Confessions of a Poet," which appeared in the April number, and which Griswold, in order to support his charge of inconsistency, ascribed to Poe, was obviously *never written by the poet at all.* Its style is a sufficient disproof of the allegation. The following letter, which Poe wrote to his friend Kennedy to tell him of his appointment on the *Messenger*, affords a sad pic-

ture of the terrible melancholia under which the poet so frequently suffered—an affliction not merely the result of privations and grief, but undoubtedly, to some extent, inherited :—

" Richmond, September 11, 1835.

"Dear Sir—I received a letter from Dr. Miller, in which he tells me you are in town. I hasten, therefore, to write you, and express by letter what I have always found it impossible to express orally—my deep sense of gratitude for your frequent and ineffectual assistance and kindness. Through your influence Mr. White has been induced to employ me in assisting him with the editorial duties of his magazine, at a salary of five hundred and twenty dollars per annum. The situation is agreeable to me for many reasons, but, alas ! it appears to me that nothing can give me pleasure or the slightest gratification. Excuse me, my dear sir, if in this letter you find much incoherency. My feelings at this moment are pitiable indeed. I am suffering under a depression of spirits such as I have never felt before. I have struggled in vain against the influence of this melancholy; *you will believe me* when I say that I am still miserable in spite of the great improvement in my circumstances. I say you will believe me, and for this simple reason, that a man who is writing for *effect* does not write thus. My heart is open before you; if it be worth reading, read it. I am wretched and know not why. Console me—for you can. But let it be quickly, or it will be too late. Write me immediately; convince me that it is worth one's while—that it is at all necessary to live, and you will prove yourself indeed my friend. Persuade me to do what is right. I do mean this. I do not mean that you should consider what I now write you a jest. Oh, pity me! for I feel that my words are incoherent; but I will recover myself. You will not fail to see that I am suffering under a depression of spirits which will ruin me should it be long continued. Write me then and quickly; urge me to do what is right. Your words will have more weight with me than the words of others,

for you were my friend when no one else was. Fail not, as you value your peace of mind hereafter.

"E. A. Poe."

To this wail of despair Mr. Kennedy sent the following kindly if commonplace reply:—

"I am sorry to see you in such a plight as your letter shows you in. It is strange that just at this time, when everybody is praising you, and when fortune is beginning to smile upon your hitherto wretched circumstances, you should be invaded by these blue devils. It belongs however to your age and temper to be thus buffeted—but be assured, it only wants a little resolution to master the adversary forever. You will doubtless do well henceforth in literature, and add to your *comforts*, as well as to your reputation, which it gives me pleasure to assure you is everywhere rising in popular esteem."

Notwithstanding his "blue devils," as Mr. Kennedy styled it, the new editor worked wonders with the *Messenger*. "His talents made that periodical quite brilliant while he was connected with it," records this friend, and indeed in little more than a twelvemonth Poe raised its circulation from seven hundred to nearly five thousand. This success was partially due to the originality and fascination of Poe's stories, and partially owing to the fearlessness of his trenchant critiques. He could not be made, either by flattery or abuse, a respecter of persons. In the December number of the *Messenger* he began that system of literary scarification—that crucial dissection of bookmaking mediocrities, which, whilst it

created throughout the length and breadth of the States a terror of his powerful pen, at the same time raised up against him a host of implacable, *though unknown*, enemies, who were only too glad, from that time, to seize upon and repeat any story, however improbable, to his discredit. Far better would it have been for his future welfare if, instead of affording contemporary nonentities a chance of literary immortality by impaling them upon his pen's sharp point, he had devoted his whole time to the production of his wonderful stories, or still more wonderful poems. Why could he not have left the task of crushing or puffing the works of his Liliputian contemporaries to the ordinary "disappointed authors?"

During the whole of 1836 Poe devoted his entire attention to the *Messenger*, producing tales, poems, essays, and reviews in profusion, indeed, apparently at Mr. White's suggestion, frittering away his genius over these last. Early in the year a gleam of hope seemed to break in upon his checkered career. In Richmond, once more among his kindred, he met and married his cousin Virginia, the daughter of his father's sister Maria. Miss Clemm was but a girl in years, and already manifested symptoms of the family complaint, consumption, but, undeterred by this or by his slender income, the poor poet was married to his kinswoman, and, it must be confessed, in happier circumstances, a better helpmate could scarcely have been found for him, while the marriage

had the further advantage of bringing him under the motherly care of his aunt, Mrs. Clemm. Until January, 1837, Poe continued the direction of the *Messenger*, when he left it for the more lucrative employment of assisting Professors Anthon, Hawks, and Henry, in the management of the *New York Quarterly Review*, and, probably, to aid the first in his classical labors—a work for which his scholarly attainment rendered him invaluable. Mr. White parted with Poe very reluctantly, and in the number of the *Messenger* which contained the announcement of Poe's resignation, issued a note to the subscribers, wherein, after alluding to the ability with which the retiring editor had conducted the magazine, he remarked, "Mr. Poe, however, will continue to furnish its columns from time to time with the effusions of his vigorous and popular pen." We dwell upon this incident, and upon the fact, more than once acknowledged by Mr. White, that Poe *resigned for other employment*, because Griswold expressly declares that he was dismissed for drunkenness.

From Richmond, Poe removed to New York, where he and his household resided in Carmine Street. In his writing for the *New York Quarterly Review*, says Mr. Powell, "he came down pretty freely with his critical ax, and made many enemies." These reviews display his immense learning, and the extraordinary range of subjects with which he was conversant, but it is impossible to peruse them with-

out grieving at the loss literature sustained by his dissipating his powers over such *ephemera.* The late Mr. William Gowans, the wealthy and respected, but eccentric bibliopolist, of New York, has left us a most interesting picture of the poet's *ménage* at this period of his story. Alluding to the untruthfulness of the prevalent idea of Poe's character, the shrewd old man remarks, "I, therefore, will also show you my opinion of this gifted but unfortunate genius. It may be estimated as worth little, but it has this merit—it comes from an eye and ear witness; and this, it must be remembered, is the very highest of legal evidence. For eight months or more one house contained us, one table fed! During that time I saw much of him, and had an opportunity of conversing with him often, and I must say that I never saw him the least affected with liquor, nor even descend to any known vice, while he was one of the most courteous gentlemanly, and intelligent companions I have met with during my journeyings and haltings through divers divisions of the globe; besides, he had an extra inducement to be a good man as well as a good husband for he had a wife of matchless beauty and loveliness; her eyes could match that of any houri, and her face defy the genius of a Canova to imitate; a temper and disposition of surpassing sweetness; besides, she seemed as much devoted to him and his every interest as a young mother is to her first-born. . . Poe had a remarkably pleasing and prepossessing

countenance what the ladies would call decidedly handsome."

Through the courtesy of a correspondent we are permitted to extract the following additional testimony from a private letter written by Mr. Thomas C. Latto, a friend of Mr. Gowans, on the 8th July, 1870. "In conversation with William Gowans," says Mr. Latto, "he told me that he was a boarder in the house of Mrs. Clemm. . . . Mr. Poe and his young wife, whom Mr. G. describes as fragile in constitution but of remarkable beauty, boarded at that time with Mrs. Clemm. They were in poor circumstances. Mr. Gowans lived with them several months, and he was often consulted by Mrs. Clemm as to the ways and means, as the boarding-house business did not pay. He only left when the household was broken up. Of course Mr. Gowans had the best opportunity of seeing what kind of life the poet led. His testimony is, that he (Poe) was uniformly quiet, reticent, gentlemanly in demeanor, and during the whole period he lived there, not the slightest trace of intoxication or dissipation was discernible in the illustrious inmate, who was at that time engaged in the composition of Arthur Gordon Pym. Poe kept good hours, and all his little wants were seen to both by Mrs. Clemm and her daughter, who watched him as sedulously as if he had been a child. Mr. Gowans is himself a man of intelligence, and being a Scotchman, is by no means averse to '*a two-handed crack*,' but he felt himself

kept at a distance somewhat by Poe's aristocratic reserve."

"Mr. Gowans," remarks Mr. Latto, "is known to be one of the most truthful and uncompromising of men."

During January and February of this year (1837) Poe contributed the first portions of "the Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym" to the *Messenger*, and encouraged by the interest it excited, he determined to complete it. It was not published in book form, however, until July of the following year, and although it did not excite much attention in America it was very successful in England. Griswold, displaying his usual *animus*, remarks that copies being sent to England, and it "being mistaken at first for a narrative of real experiences, it was advertised to be reprinted, but a discovery of its character, I *believe*, prevented such a result. An attempt is made in it," he continues, "by simplicity of style, minuteness of nautical descriptions, and circumstantiality of narration, to give it that air of truth which constitutes the principal attraction of Sir Edward Seaward's narrative, and 'Robinson Crusoe,' but it has none of the pleasing interest of these tales; it is as full of wonders as 'Munchausen,' has as many atrocities as the 'Book of Pirates, and as liberal array of paining and revolting horrors as ever was invented by Anne Radcliffe or George Walker." His further depreciatory remarks are not worth reproduction. The fact is that in a short in-

terval the story was several times reprinted in England, and it did excite considerable notice; the "air of truth," which, it is suggested, was only in the attempt, having attracted much interest.

The independence which Poe had hoped to earn by his pen was not obtainable in those days at New York, and having prospect of constant employment in Philadelphia, he removed to that city late in 1838, and entered into an arrangement to write for the *Gentleman's Magazine*, a publication of some years' standing. His talents soon produced the usual brilliant effects upon this publication, and in May, 1839, he was appointed to the editorial management, "devoting to it," says Griswold, "for ten dollars a week, two hours every day, which left him abundant time for more important labors." What leisure his editorial duties may have left was devoted to writing for other publications, and as several of his tales and other compositions first made their appearance at this time, it is to be presumed that he managed to obtain a fair livelihood. Still he was not only compelled to labor continuously and severely, but was frequently forced by the *res angusta domi* to forsake his legitimate province in literature, and turn his pen to any project that offered a certain remuneration. There is a scandalous story told of him by Griswold in support of his wholesale denunciation of Poe as a plagiarist, and which, although the accuser does

not state to what period of the poet's life it refers, really relates to this epoch. Griswold, on the authority, he asserts, of a Philadelphian newspaper, declares that Poe reprinted a popular work on conchology, written by the well-known naturalist, Captain Thomas Brown, as by himself, "and actually took out a copyright for the American edition of Captain Brown's work, and omitting all mention of the English original, pretended in the preface to have been under great obligations to several scientific gentlemen of this city." For ten years after Poe's death this vile calumny circulated unanswered wherever the poet's biography was told, and although many of the American literati must have known the untruth of the story, no one ventured to explain the facts until ultimately it came under the notice of the person of all others best able to disprove it which he did through the columns of the *Home Journal.* Professor Wyatt, a Scotchman of considerable erudition and scientific attainments, formed Poe's acquaintance, and obtained his assistance in the compilation of several works on Natural History: among others was a "Manual of Conchology," and to this Poe, whose scientific knowledge was most comprehensive and exact, contributed so largely that the publishers were fully justified in using his popular name on the title-page, although he only received a share of the profits. Captain Brown's "Text-Book of Conchology," necessarily bears some resemblance to the

combined work of Poe and Wyatt, from the simple fact that both treatises are founded by the system laid down by Lamarck, but the absurd charge that one is therefore plagiarized from the other can only have arisen from gross ingnorance or willful falsehood. About this time Poe also published, as a sequence of such studies, a translation and digest of Lemonnier's "Natural History," and other relative writings.

In the autumn of 1839, Poe made a collection of his best stories, and published them in two volumes as tales of the "Arabesque and Grotesque." This collection contained some of his most imaginative writing, and still further increased its author's reputation. It included the story of "The Fall of the House of Usher"—a story which contains the characteristic poem of "The Haunted Palace." Griswold avers that Poe was indebted to Longfellow's "Beleaguered City" for his idea of this exquisite poem, but that Poe asserted Longfellow to have been indebted to him for the idea. We do not believe in plagiarisms, as a rule, and whether the author of "The Haunted Palace" did, or did not, accuse his brother bard of robbery we know not, but must simply point out that Poe's poem had been published long prior to Longfellow's and not "a few weeks," as Griswold says, and in two different publications. The resemblance was probably purely accidental, but at all events, Tennyson had worked out the same idea many years previous to either in "The Deserted House," published in 1830.

"Ligeia," Poe's favorite tale, also appeared in this collection. On a copy of this weird story, in our possession, is an endorsement by the poet to the effect that "Ligeia, was also suggested by a *dream;*" the "also" referring to a poem sent to Mrs. Whitman, and which, he remarks to her, "contained all the events of a *dream* which occurred soon after I knew you."

Towards the close of 1840, Mr. George R. Graham, owner of *The Casket*, acquired possession of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and merging the two publications into one, began the new series as *Graham's Magazine*, a title which, it is believed, it still retains. The new proprietor was only too willing to retain the services of the brilliant editor, and he found his reward in so doing—Edgar Poe, assisted by Mr. Graham's liberality to his contributors, in little more than two years raising the number of subscribers to the magzine from five to fifty-two thousand. His daring critiques, his analytic essays, and his weird stories, following one another in rapid succession, startled the public into a knowledge of his power. He created new enemies, however, by the dauntless intrepidity with which he assailed the fragile reputations of the small book-makers, especially by the publication of his papers on "Autography." He also excited much criticism in literary circles by the publication of his papers on "Cryptology," in which he promulgated the theory that human ingenuity could not construct any cryptograph

which human ingenuity could not decipher. Tested by several correspondents with difficult samples of their skill, the poet actually took the trouble to examine and solve them in triumphant proof of the truth of his theory.

In April, 1841, he published in *Graham's Magazine* tale of "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," the first of a series illustrating another analytic phase of his many-sided mind. This story was the first to introduce his name to the French public, being translated, and published as an original story by *Le Commerce*, under the title of "L'Orang-Otang:" shortly afterwards it was translated, again, and appeared in the pages of *La Quotidienne*, whereupon a cry was raised, a lawsuit instituted, and ultimately the truth discovered, that Edgar Poe, an American, was the author. Madam Mannier availed herself of the interest created by this inquiry to translate several of his stories for the French papers; whilst the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, *Revue Francaise* and other leading publications spoke in highly flattering terms of the young foreigner's productions. This gave an impetus to his reputation in France, which culminated in the faithfully *vraisemblant* translations of Baudelaire, who, indeed, spent many years of his life in an endeavor to thoroughly identify his mind with that of his idol Edgar Poe, and who has reproduced many of his stories with but little loss of vigor or originality: indeed, to the efforts and genius of Baudelair is chiefly due the

fact that Poe's tales have become standard classic works in France. Edgar Poe is veritably, it may be pointed out, the only American writer really well known and popular in France. In Spain, too, Poe's tales early acquired fame, and have now become thoroughly nationalized; and with the exception of works on Spanish subjects, such as those by Washington Irving, Prescott and Motley, are the only American works known in that country. In Germany the poems and tales have been frequently translated, but it is only quite recently that they attained any widely-diffused celebrity amongst the Germans.

In 1842 appeared "The Descent into the Maelström," a tale that in many respects may be deemed one of his most marvellous and idiosyncratic. It is one of those tales which, like "The Gold-Bug" and others, demonstrates the untenability of the theory first promulgated by Griswold, and since so frequently echoed by his copyists, that Poe's ingenuity in unriddling a mystery was only ingenious in appearance, as he himself had woven the webs he so dexterously unweaves. The tales cited, however, prove the falseness of this portion of Griswold's systematic depreciation of Poe's genius. *They* are the secrets of nature which he unveils, and not the riddles of art: he did not invent the natural truth that a cylindrical body, swimming in a vortex, offered more resistance to its suction, and was drawn in with greater difficulty than bodies of any other form of

equal bulk, any more than he invented the mathematical ratio in which certain letters of the English alphabet recur in all documents of any length. He did not invent "The Mystery of Marie Roget," but he tore away the mysteriousness and laid bare the truth of that strange story of real life. He did not invent, but he was the first to describe, if not to discover, those peculiar idiosyncrasies of the human mind so wonderfully but so clearly displayed in "The Murders in the Rue Morgue." "The Purloined Letter," "The Imp of the Perverse," and other remarkable proofs of his mastery over the mental strings and pulleys of our being.

It was during his brilliant editorship of *Graham's Magazine* that Poe discovered and first introduced to the American public the genius of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and it was whilst he held sway over it that she contributed to its pages many of her shorter poems; indeed, it was greatly due to Poe that her fame in America was coeval with if it did not somewhat precede that won by her in her native land. In May, 1841, he contributed to the Philadelphia *Saturday Evening Post*—a paper belonging to Mr. Graham, and for which Poe wrote—that *prospective* notice of the newly-commenced story of "Barnaby Rudge," which drew from Dickens a letter of admiring acknowledgment. In this notice the poet with mathematical precision explained and foretold the exact plot of the as yet-unwritten story.

Professor Wyatt, already alluded to in connection with the conchology story, was not only a contributor of articles on natural history to *Graham's*, but at this time, and for several years, was intimately acquainted with Poe, and we have his unimpeachable authority for the invariable honor and purity of the poet's life.

In November, 1842, "The Mystery of Marie Roget" appeared, and about the same time Poe resigned his post of joint editor and reviewer of *Graham's Magazine;* why or wherefore was never stated but that it was not through drunkenness, as alleged by Griswold —the successor to Poe's editorial duties—Mr. Graham's own famous letter of 1850 conclusively proves. Poe's idea would appear to have been to start a magazine of his own, but his resignation may perhaps be justly ascribed to that constitutional restlessness which from time to time overpowered him, and drove him from place to place in a vain search after the Eldorado of his hopes. The truth as to his severance from *Graham's*, like so many of the details that enshroud and confuse his life's story, was probably purposely mystified by Poe, who had even a greater love than had Byron of mystifying the impertinent busybodies who wearied him for biographical information. It was shortly previous to this epoch in his life that he had the misfortune to make the acquaintance of Rufus Griswold, a man who, although several years Poe's junior

in age, had, by many years' "knocking about the world," gained an experience of its shifts and subterfuges that made him far more than a match for the unworldly nature of our poet. According to the author of the "Memoir," his acquaintance with Poe began in the spring of 1841, by the poet calling at his hotel and leaving two letters of introduction. "The next morning," he says, "I visited him, and we had a long conversation about literature and literary men, pertinent to the subject of a book, 'The Poets and Poetry of America,' which I was then preparing for the press," and he follows up this introductory interview with the quotation of several letters purporting to have been written by Poe, not one of which we shall refer to or make use of, as there is pretty positive proof that some, if not the whole of them *are fabrications!* The enmity of Griswold for Poe—"the long, intense, and implacable enmity," alluded to by John Neal and Mr. Graham —is so palpable to readers of the "Memoir," that it needed not the outside evidence which has been so abundantly furnished us to prove it, and the wonder is, not so much that the biographer's audacious falsifications should have obtained credit abroad, as that no American should have produced as complete a refutation of them as could and *should* have been given years ago. Apart from deadly enmity, aroused by a subject of a domestic nature, the compiler could not forgive Poe for exposing his literary shortcomings. The only passage

in which the *soi-disant* biographer appears to relent towards the dead poet is that in which he alludes to his own visit to Poe's residence in Philadephia. "It was while he resided in Philadelphia," Griswold remarks, "that I became acquainted with him. His manner was very quiet and gentlemanly; he was usually dressed with simplicity and elegance, and when once he sent for me to visit him, during a period of illness caused by protracted and anxious watching at the side of his sick wife, I was impressed by the singular neatness and the air of refinement in his home. It was in a small house in one of the pleasant and silent neighborhoods far from the town, and, though slightly and cheaply furnished, everything in it was so tastefully and fitly disposed that it seemed altogether suitable for a man of genius." On seceding from *Graham's*, Poe seems to have endeavored to start a magazine of his own, to be entitled *The Stylus*, and Mr. Thomas C. Clark, of Philadelphia, was to have been the publisher. The poet does not appear to have been enabled to obtain a sufficient number of subscribers to start the projected publication on a sound basis, and therefore the scheme fell through. Mr. Clarke, who is still residing in Philadelphia, speaks in high terms of Poe's probity and honor, as indeed does every one, save Griswold, who had dealings with him. It is much to be regretted that circumstances have prevented Mr. Clark giving to the world his reminiscences and collected facts relating to Edgar Poe.

In the spring of 1843 the one hundred dollar prize, offered by *The Dollar Magazine*, was obtained by Poe for his tale of "The Gold Bug," a tale illustrative of and originating with his theory of ciphers. As usual, Griswold, in mentioning it, cannot refrain from displaying the cloven hoof, and, knowing it to be the most popular of Poe's stories in America, refers to it "as one of the most remarkable illustrations of his ingenuity of construction and *apparent* subtlety of reasoning." During this year Poe wrote for Lowell's *Pioneer*, and other publications. In 1844 he removed to New York, whither his daily increasing fame had already preceded him, and where he entered into a more congenial literary atmosphere than that in which he had recently resided. In the cities in which he had hitherto exercised his talents he was continually treading upon the mental corns of provincial cliques, but in New York, as he now entered it, he found a nearer approach to metropolitanism, and therefore a fairer field for the recognition of his powers. "For the first time," remarks Griswold, completely ignoring the talent of all other American cities, "for the first time he was received into circles capable of both the appreciation and the production of literature." It has generally been assumed that the first publication he wrote for in New York was the *Daily Mirror*, but the author of a sketch of Willis and his contemporaries, contributed to the *Northern*

*Monthly* in 1868, referring to Poe as "one who has been more shamefully maligned and slandered than any other writer that can be named," states, "I say this from personal knowledge of Mr. Poe, who was associated with myself in the editorial conduct of my own paper *before* his introduction into the office of Messrs. Willis and Morris;" adding, "for Mr. Willis's manly vindication of Poe from his biographer's degrading accusations," he says, "Mr. Willis's testimony is freely confirmed by other publishers. On this subject I have some singular revelations which throw a strong light on the causes that darkened the life, and made most unhappy the death, of one of the most remarkable of all our literary men—as an English reviewer once said, 'the most brilliant genius of his country.'"

Toward the autumn of the year Poe sought and found employment as sub-editor and critic on the *Mirror*, a daily paper belonging to N. P. Willis and General George Morris. In a letter written by Willis from Idlewild, in October, 1859, to his brother poet and former copartner Morris, he thus alludes to Poe's engagement with him:—"Poe came to us quite incidentally, neither of us having been personally acquainted with him till that time; and his position towards us, and connection with us, of course unaffected by claims of previous friendship, were a fair average of his general intercourse and impressions. As he was a man who never smiled and never said a pro-

pitiatory or deprecating word, we were not likely to have been seized with any sudden partiality or wayward caprice in his favor. . . . It was rather a step downward, after being the chief editor of several monthlies, as Poe had been, to come into the office of a daily journal as a mechanical paragraphist. It was his business to sit at a desk, in a corner of the editorial room, ready to be called upon for any of the miscellaneous work of the day; yet you remember how absolutely and how good-humoredly ready he was for any suggestion; how punctually and industriously reliable in the following out of the wish once expressed; how cheerful and present-minded his work when he might excusably have been so listless and abstracted. WE LOVED THE MAN for the entireness of the fidelity with which he served us. When he left us, we were very reluctant to part with him; but we could not object—he was to take the lead in another periodical."

During the six months or so that Poe was engaged on the *Mirror*—the whole of which time Willis asserts "he was invariably punctual and industrious," and was daily "at his desk in the office from nine in the morning till the evening paper went to press"—during this time some of the most remarkable productions of his genius, including his poetic *chef-d'œuvre* of "The Raven," were given to the world. This unique and most original of poems first appeared in Colton's *American Review* for February, 1845, as by "Quarles." It was at

once reprinted in the *Evening Mirror*, and in a few weeks had spread over the whole of the United States calling into existence parodies and imitations innumerable. Mrs. Whitman informs us that, when "The Raven," appeared, Poe one evening electrified the gay company assembled at a weekly reunion of noted artists and men of letters, held at the residence of an accomplished poetess in Waverley Place, by the recitation, at the request of his hostess, of this wonderful poem. After this, it was of course impossible to keep the authorship secret. Willis reprinted the poem with the author's name attached, remarking that, in his opinion, "it was the most effective single example of fugitive poetry ever published in this country, and is unsurpassed in English poetry for subtle conception, masterly ingenuity of versification, and consistent sustaining of imaginative lift." It carried its author's name and fame from shore to shore; drew admiring testimony from some of the first of English poets, and finally made him the lion of the season. And for this masterpiece of genius—this poem which has probably done more for the renown of American letters than any other single work—it is alleged that Poe, then at the height of his renown, received the sum of ten dollars, that is, about two pounds!

In the February number of *Graham's Magazine* for this same year appeared a biographical and critical sketch of Edgar Poe by James Russell Lowell. In many respects we deem it

the best critique on his genius that we have yet seen, and although the estimate formed of Poe's poetic precocity may not be perfectly just, it is difficult to find fault with the admirable analyzation of his prose writings. It is somewhat singular, however, that in the collection of Poe's works edited by Griswold, Mr. Lowell should permit the continual reprinting of this critique "with a few alterations and omissions," when those very omissions serve to give color to one of Griswold's vilest charges, that of the alleged theft of Captain Brown's Conchology book. In the beginning of this year the *Broadway Journal* was started, and in March Poe was associated with two journalists in its management. He had written for it from the first, but had nothing to do with the editorial arrangement until the tenth number. One of the most noticeable of his contributions was a critique on the poems of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, to whom he shortly afterwards dedicated, in most admiring terms, a selection of his poems, published by Messrs. Wiley & Putman, under the title "The Raven and other Poems." About the same time the same firm published a selection from his prose compositions as "Tales," and another firm reprinted his "Tales of the Grotesque and Picturesque," so that his name was kept well before the public.

Several of the stories were now published in an English collection, as was also "The Raven." Mrs. Browning, in a private letter

written a few weeks after the publication of the poem, says:—"This vivid writing—this *power which is felt*—has produced a sensation here in England. Some of my friends are taken by the fear of it, and some by the music. I hear of persons who are haunted by the 'Never more,' and an acquaintance of mine who has the misfortune of possessing a bust of Pallas cannot bear to look at it in the twilight." And then, alluding to Poe's story of "Mesmeric Revelations," which some English journals accepted as a faithful record of facts, the Poetess resumes:—"Then there is a tale going the rounds of the newspapers about mesmerism, which is throwing us all into 'most admired disorder'—dreadful doubts as to whether it can be true, as the children say of ghost stories. The certain thing about it is the power of the writer."

By this time Edgar Poe had become personally known to and admired by a large number of the literati of New York, "whose interest in his writings," remarks Mrs. Whitman, "was manifestly enhanced by the perplexing anomalies of his character, and by the singular magnetism of his presence." One who knew him at this period of his life, says:—"Everything about him distinguished him as a man of mark; his countenance, person, and gait, were alike characteristic. His features were regular, and decidedly handsome. His complexion was clear and dark; the color of his fine eyes seemingly a dark gray, but on closer

inspection they were seen to be of that neutral violet tint which is so difficult to define. His forehead was, without exception, the finest in proportion and expression that we have ever seen."

Edgar Poe left the *Mirror* to take charge of the *Broadway Journal*, the sole management of which, however, did not devolve upon him until July, whilst it was not till the following October that he became proprietor as well as editor of this publication. His confederates do not appear to have invested much money or talent in the undertaking, and when they retired and left the poet in entire possession of the publication, he would not seem to have added much to his worldly goods by the acquisition.

In March he gave a lecture on the American poets in the library of the New York Historical Society, and it attracted much attention, not only by the originality and courage of his remarks, but by the fascination of his presence, by his eloquence, and personal beauty. The *furore* which his lecture created caused him to be asked to Boston, and in the autumn he accepted an invitation to recite a poem in the lyceum of that city. "When he accepted the invitation," avers Griswold, "he intended to write an original poem, upon a subject which he said had haunted his imagination for years, but cares, anxieties, and feebleness of will prevented, and a week before the appointed night he wrote a friend imploring as-

sistance. 'You compose with such astonishing facility,' he urged in his letter, 'that you can easily furnish one quite soon enough, a poem that shall be equal to my reputation. For the love of God I beseech you to help me in this extremity.' The lady wrote him kindly, advising him judiciously, but promising to attempt the fulfillment of his wishes. She was, however, an invalid, and so failed. At last, instead of pleading illness, as he had previously done on a similar occasion, he determined to read his poem, of 'Al Aaraaf.'" It is impossible to say how much, if any, of his story is true. That a poem equal to his reputation could have been composed in a week, or in any length of time, by Mrs. Osgood, the friend alluded to, none knew better to be impossible than Poe. The lady, however, died before the publication of the "Memoirs," therefore Griswold, who was her confidant, was pretty safe in telling the tale. One who was present on the occasion of the recitation informs us that the lecture-course of the Boston Lyceum was waning in popularity, and that Poe's fame being at its zenith, he was invited to deliver a poem at the opening of the winter session. "I remember him well," he remarks, "as he came on the platform. He was the best realization of a poet in feature, air, and manner, that I had ever seen, and the unusual paleness of his face added to its aspect of melancholy interest. He delivered a poem that no one understood, but at its con-

clusion gave the audience a treat which almost redeemed their disappointment. This was the recitation of his own 'Raven,' which he repeated with thrilling effect. It was something well worth treasuring in memory." "Poe," he adds, "after he returned to New York, was much incensed at Boston criticism on his poem."

The poet was not probably incensed to any very great extent; but doubtless found it a profitable hit for his journal to make what he termed a "bobbery." A week after the lecture, therefore, he began to comment, in a tone of playful badinage, upon the remarks made by some Bostonian papers with respect to it. In the *Broadway Journal* for November 1st, Poe, after quoting a paragraph from a paper defending him from the abuse of the Boston journals, says: "Our excellent friend Major Noah has suffered himself to be cajoled by that most beguiling of all little divinities, Miss Walters of the *Transcript*. We have been looking all over her article, with the aid of a taper, to see if we could discover a single syllable of truth in it, and really blush to acknowledge that we cannot. The adorable creature has been telling a parcel of fibs about us, by way of revenge for something that we did to Mr. Longfellow (who admires her very much), and for calling her 'a pretty little witch' into the bargain.

"The facts of the case seem to be these:—We *were* invited to 'deliver' (stand and de-

liver) a poem before the Boston Lyceum. As a matter of course, we accepted the invitation. The audience *was* 'large and distinguished.' Mr. Cushing preceded us with a very capital discourse. He was much applauded. On arising we were most cordially received. We occupied some fifteen minutes with an apology for not 'delivering,' as is usual in such cases, a didactic poem—a didactic poem, in our opinion, being precisely no poem at all. After some further words—still of apology—for the 'indefinitiveness,' and 'general imbecility' of what we had to offer—all so unworthy of a *Bostonian* audience—we commenced, and, with many interruptions of applause, concluded. Upon the whole, the approbation was considerably more (the more the pity too) than that bestowed upon Mr. Cushing.

"When we had made an end, the audience of course arose to depart, and about one-tenth of them probably had really departed when Mr. Coffin, one of the managing committee, arrested those who remained by the announcement that we had been requested to deliver 'The Raven.' We delivered 'The Raven' forthwith (without taking a receipt), were very cordially applauded again, and this was the end of it, with the exception of the sad tale invented, to suit her own purposes, by that amiable little enemy of ours, Miss Walters. We shall never call a woman 'a pretty little witch' again as long as we live."

There is a great deal more to the same

effect, the whole of which Griswold reprinted in his "Memoir," but we have been unable to perceive in its good-natured bantering anything objectionable, although Poe's biographer appears to have discovered something terrible hidden in the jokes about the Bostonians and their "Frog Pond," and deems "it is scarcely necessary to suggest that this must have been written before he had quite recovered from the long intoxication which maddened him at the time to which it refers." As "the time to which it refers" was evidently that of the lecture, and as it was written upwards of a week after that event, and as Poe renewed the discussion in the same tone three weeks later, "the long intoxication" must indeed have been an unusually lengthy one. One paragraph from Poe's second notice of the affair will doubtless suffice. "We know very well that, among a certain *clique* of the Frogpondians, there existed a predetermination to abuse us under *any* circumstances. We knew that write what we would they would swear it to be worthless. We knew that were we to compose for them a 'Paradise Lost' they would pronounce it an indifferent poem. It would have been very weak in us, then, to put ourselves to the trouble of attempting to please these people. We preferred pleasing ourselves. We read before them a 'juvenile,' a *very* juvenile,' poem, and thus the Frogpondians were *had*, were delivered up to the enemy bound hand and foot. Never were a set of people more

completely demolished. They have blustered and flustered, but what have they done or said that has not made them more thoroughly ridiculous? what in the name of Thomas, is it *possible* for them to do or to say? We 'delivered' them the 'juvenile poem,' and they received it with applause. This is accounted for by the fact that the *clique* (contemptible in numbers as in everything else) were overruled by the rest of the assembly. These malignants did not *dare* to interrupt by their preconcerted hisses the respectful and profound attention of the majority. . . . . The poem being thus well received in spite of this ridiculous little cable, the next thing to be done was to abuse it in the papers. Here they imagined they were sure of their game. But what have they accomplished? The poem, they say, is bad. We admit it. We insisted upon this fact in our prefatory remarks, and we insist upon it now, over and over again." . . .

And these hurried newspaper jottings, which Griswold himself admits were written when Poe was suffering from "cares, anxieties, and feebleness of will," and when, as he elsewhere shows, the poor persecuted poet was in pecuniary difficulties, and when, not able to pay for assistance, he was obliged somehow to write nearly all the journal himself; and yet, under all these conflicting ills, these few jocular, although overstrained, jottings are unearthed and adduced as evidence of Poe's

irretrievably bad nature. It is a more pleasant task than having to refer to such distorted views of envy, hatred, and malice, to turn to the picture which Mrs. Osgood gives of Poe at this point in his life. "My first meeting with the poet," she remarks, "was at the Astor House. A few days previous Mr. Willis had handed me at the *table d' hôte* that strange and thrilling poem entitled 'The Raven,' saying that the author wanted my opinion of it. Its effect upon me was so singular, so like that of 'weird, unearthly music,' that it was with a feeling almost of dread I heard he desired an introduction. Yet I could not refuse without seeming ungrateful, because I had just heard of his enthusiastic and partial eulogy of my writings in his lecture on American Literature. I shall never forget the morning when I was summoned to the drawing-room by Mr. Willis to receive him. With his proud and beautiful head erect, his dark eyes flashing with the electric light of feeling and of thought, a peculiar, an inimitable blending of sweetness and of *hauteur* in his expression and manner, he greeted me calmly, gravely, almost coldly, yet with so marked an earnestness that I could not help being deeply impressed by it. From that moment until his death we were friends." Again she writes of Poe—"I have never seen him otherwise than gentle, generous, well-bred, and fastidiously refined. To a sensitive and delicately-nurtured woman there was a peculiar and irresistible charm in the chivalric,

graceful, and almost tender reverence with which he invariably approached all women who won his respect."

Another and still more devoted friend of the fascinating poet, Mrs. Whitman, quotes the opinions of "a woman of fine genius," who at this time made Poe's acquaintance. "It was in the brilliant circles," she says, "that assembled in the winter of 1845–46 at the houses of Dr. Dewy, Miss Anna Lynch, Mr. Lawson, and others, that we first met Edgar Poe. His manners were at these reunions refined and pleasing, and his style and scope of conversation that of a gentleman and a scholar. Whatever may have been his previous career, there was nothing in his appearance or manner to indicate his excesses. He delighted in the society of superior women, and had an exquisite perception of all graces of manner and shades of expression. We all recollect the interest felt at the time in everything emanating from his pen—the relief it was from the dullness of ordinary writers—the certainty of something fresh and suggestive. His critiques were read with avidity; not that he convinced the judgment, but that people felt their ability and *their courage*. Right or wrong, he was terribly in earnest." "And," as Mrs. Whitman adds, "like De Quincey, he never *supposed* anything, he always *knew*."

This last lady, in her thoughtful work on "Edgar Poe and his Critics" recounts an incident of the poet which occurred at one of the

soirées he was accustomed to attend. "A lady, noted for her great lingual attainments, wishing to apply a wholesome check to the vanity of a young author, proposed inviting him to translate for the company a difficult passage in Greek, of which language she knew him to be profoundly ignorant, although given to a rather pretentious display of Greek quotations in his published writings. Poe's earnest and persistent remonstrance against this piece of *méchancété* alone averted the embarrassing test. Trifling as this anecdote may appear, it is a good proof of that generous and charitable disposition which those who knew him only through Griswold's "Memoir," have so unwarrantably denied him the possession of. Reverting to Mrs. Whitman's book, we learn that "sometimes his fair young wife was seen with him at these weekly assemblages in Waverley Place. She seldom took part in the conversation, but the memory of her sweet and girlish face, always animated and vivacious, repels the assertion, afterwards so cruelly and reck lessly made, that she died a victim to the neglect and unkindness of her husband, who, as it has been said, 'deliberately sought her death that he might embalm her memory in immortal dirges.'" Gilfillan tells us that Poe caused the death of his wife that he might have a fitting theme for "The Raven;" but unfortunately for the truth of that reverend gentleman's theory, the poem was published two years previous to the event which he so ingeni-

ously assumed it to commemorate. Friend and foe alike, who knew anything of Poe, bear testimony to the unvarying kindness and affection of the poet for his youthful wife. "It is well known to those acquainted with the parties," says Mrs. Whitman, "that the young wife of Edgar Poe died of lingering consumption, which manifested itself early in her girlhood. All who have had opportunities for observation in the matter have noticed her husband's tender devotion to her during her prolonged illness. . . . It is true that, notwithstanding her vivacity and cheerfulness at the time we have alluded to, her health was even then rapidly sinking; and it was for her dear sake, and for the recovery of that peace which had been so fatally imperiled amid the irritations and anxieties of his New York life, that Poe left the city and removed to the little Dutch cottage in Fordham, where he passed the three remaining years of his life."

The labors of Edgar Poe during his possession of the *Broadway Journal* must have been enormous. Week after week he wrote a large portion of its folio pages himself, in addition to performing the thousand duties of an editorial proprietor—the "much friendly assistance," which Griswold, who said also that he was friendless, asserts he received in his management of the journal, being chiefly confined to the contribution of a few verses. He was only able to comply with this great strain upon his mental and physical strength by re-

printing many of his published tales and poems in the columns of his paper, and even this system could not have afforded very material relief, as every article was submitted to the most scrutinizing supervision, and an infinity of corrections and alterations made. A journal of his own, in which he could give vent to his untrammeled opinions, unchecked by the mercantile, and, undoubtedly, more prudential views of publishers, had long been one of Poe's most earnest desires, and he attained his wish in the possession of the *Broadway Journal;* but poverty, ill-health, want of worldly knowledge, and a sick—a dying wife, all combined to overpower his efforts. What could the unfortunate poet do? During the few months that he had complete control of the moribund journal he made it, considering all things, as good a cheap literary paper as was ever published. All his efforts, however, were insufficient to keep it alive, so, on the 3d of January, 1846, the poor poet was obliged to resign his favorite hobby of a paper of his own. It may be pointed out that whilst in possession of his journal he availed himself of the opportunity of displaying his almost Quixotic feelings of gratitude—those feelings denied him by the ruthless Griswold—towards all who had befriended him, and not only to the living whose aid might continue, but towards those who had already entered into the "hollow vale." His generous tributes to departed worth are proofs of his nobility of heart, of greater

weight than any disproof the malignity of Griswold would invent.

Besides the work on his own paper, Poe had somehow contrived to contribute a few tales and sketches to some of the magazines, and, among others, to Mr. Godey's *Lady's Book*. In the May number of this publication he commenced a series of critiques, entitled the "Literati of New York," "in which he professed," remarks Griswold, with his wonted sneer, "to give some honest opinions at random respecting their authorial merits." These essays were immensely successful, but the caustic style of some of them produced terrible commotion in the ranks of mediocrity, as may be seen from Mr. Godey's notes to the readers respecting the anonymous and other letters he receives concerning them. "We are not to be intimidated," he remarks, "by a threat of the loss of friends, or turned from our purpose by honeyed words. . . . Many attempts have been made and are being made by various persons to forestall public opinion. *We have the name of one person.* Others are busy with reports of Mr. Poe's illness. Mr. Poe has been ill, but we have letters from him of very recent dates, also a new batch of the *Literati*, which shows anything but feebleness either of body or mind. Almost every paper that we exchange with has praised our new enterprise, and spoken in high terms of Mr. Poe's opinion." Dissatisfied with the manner in which his literary weakness had been reviewed by Poe a

Dunn English or Dunn Brown, for he is duplicately named, instead of waiting, as Griswold did, for the poet's death, when every ass could have its kick at the lion's carcase, "retaliated in a personal newspaper article," remarks Duyckinck, in his invaluable *Encyclopedia*, and "the communication was reprinted in the *Evening Mirror* in New York, whereupon Poe instituted a libel suit against that journal, and recovered several hundred dollars for defamation of character."

If there be any one entertaining the slightest belief in Griswold's veracity, let him now refer to his unfaithful account of this affair in the *soi-disant* "Memoir," and compare it with the facts of the case. He states that Dunn English "chose to evince his resentment of the critic's unfairness by the publication of a card, in which he painted strongly the infirmities of Poe's life and character." "Poe's article," he continues, "was entirely false in what purported to be the facts. The statement of Dr. English appeared in the *New York Mirror* of the 23d June, and on the 27th Mr. Poe sent to Mr. Godey, for publication in the *Lady's Book*, his rejoinder, which Mr. Godey very properly declined to print." This led, asserts Griswold, "to a disgraceful quarrel," and to the "premature conclusion" of the *Literati;* and that Poe "ceased to write for the *Lady's Book* in consequence of Mr. Godey's justifiable refusal to print in that miscellany his 'Reply to Dr. English.'" Poe's review of "English" ap-

peared in the second or June number of the *Literati*, and from our knowledge of Griswold's habitual inaccuracy, we were not surprised to find, upon reference to the magazine, that the sketches ran their stipulated course until October, and after that date Poe still continuing a contributor to the *Lady's Book;* nor were we surprised to find Mr. Godey writing to the *Knickerbocker* magazine in defense and praise of Poe's "honorable and blameless conduct;" but what certainly did startle us was to discover that *the whole of the personalities* of the supposed critique, included in the collection of Poe's works *edited by Griswold*, were absent from the real critique published in the *Lady's Book!*

Recoiling from such unsavory subjects, it is a pleasant change to look upon the charming picture of the cruelly belibeled poet, and his diminutive *ménage*, as portrayed by Mrs. Osgood. "It was in his own simple yet poetical home," she remarks, "that to me the character of Edgar Poe appeared in its most beautiful light. Playful, affectionate, witty, alternately docile and wayward as a petted child —for his young, gentle, and idolized wife, and for all who came, he had, even in the midst of his most harassing literary duties, a kind word, a pleasant smile, a graceful and courteous attention. At his desk, beneath the romantic picture of his loved and lost Lenore, he would sit hour after hour, patient, assiduous, and uncomplaining, tracing in an exquisitely clear chiro-

graphy, and with almost superhuman swiftness, the lightning thoughts, the 'rare and radiant' fancies as they flashed through his wonderful and ever-wakened brain. I recollect one morning toward the close of his residence in this city, when he seemed unusually gay and light-hearted. Virginia, his sweet wife, had written me a pressing invitation to come to them; and I, who could never resist her affectionate summons, and who enjoyed his society far more in his own home than elsewhere, hastened to Amity Street. I found him just completing his series of papers entitled 'The Literati of New York.' 'See,' said he, displaying in laughing triumph several little rolls of narrow paper (he always wrote thus for the press), 'I am going to show you, by the difference of length in these, the different degrees of estimation in which I hold all you literary people. In each of these, one of you is rolled up and fully discussed. Come, Virginia, help me!' And one by one they unfolded them. At last they came to one which semed interminable. Virginia laughingly ran to one corner of the room with one end, and her husband to the opposite with the other. 'And whose lengthened sweetness long drawn out is that?' said I. 'Hear her,' he cried, 'just as if her little vain heart didn't tell her it's herself!'"

It was in the summer of 1846 that the poet removed his dying wife to the quietude and repose of the cottage at Fordham, Westchester

County, near New York. "Here," exclaims Mrs. Whitman, in her exalted essay on "Edgar Poe and his Critics"—the noblest memorial yet raised to the poet's memory—"here he watched her failing breath in loneliness and privation through many solitary moons, until, on a desolate, dreary day of the ensuing winter, he saw her remains borne from beneath its lowly roof." The fullest and most interesting account of Poe's life at Fordham is to be found in the "Reminiscences" of a brother author. Of his first visit to Fordham to see Poe he says—

"We found him and his wife and his wife's mother, who was his aunt, living in a little cottage at the top of a hill. There was an acre or two of greensward, fenced in about the house, as smooth as velvet, and as clean as the best kept carpet. There was some grand old cherry-trees in the yard that threw a massive shade around them.

"Poe had somehow caught a full-grown bob-olink. He had put him in a cage, which he had hung on a nail driven into the trunk of a cherry-tree. The poor bird was as unfit to live in a cage as his captor was to live in the world. He was as restless as his jailer, and sprang continually in a fierce, frightened way from one side of the cage to the other. I pitied him, but Poe was bent on training him. There he stood with his arms crossed before the tormented bird, his sublime trust in attaining the impossible apparent in his whole self. So handsome, so

impassive in his wonderful, intellectual beauty, so proud and reserved, and yet so confidentially communicative, so entirely a gentleman upon all occasions that I ever saw him; so tasteful, so good a talker was Poe that he impressed himself and his wishes, even without words, upon those with whom he spoke. . . . Poe's voice was melody itself. He always spoke low, even in a violent discussion, compelling his hearers to listen if they would know his opinion, his facts, fancies, philosophy, or his weird imaginings. These last usually flowed from his pen, seldom from his tongue.

"On this occasion I was introduced to the young wife of the poet, and to the mother, then more than sixty years of age. She was a tall, dignified old lady, with a most lady-like manner, and her black dress, though old and much worn, looked really elegant on her. . . . Mrs. Poe looked very young; she had large black eyes, and a pearly whiteness of complexion, which was a perfect pallor. Her pale face, her brilliant eyes, and her raven hair gave her an unearthly look. One felt that she was almost a disrobed spirit, and when she coughed it was made certain that she was rapidly passing away. The mother seemed hale and strong, and appeared to be a sort of universal Providence for her strange children.

'The cottage had an air of taste and gentility that must have been lent to it by the presence of its inmates. So neat, so poor, so unfurnished, and yet so charming a dwelling

I never saw. . . . The sitting-room was laid with check matting; four chairs, a light stand, and a hanging book-shelf completed its furniture. There were pretty presentation copies of books on the little shelves, and the Brownings had posts of honor on the stand. With quiet exultation Poe drew from his side-pocket a letter that he had recently received from Elizabeth Barrett Browning. He read it to us. It was very flattering. She told Poe that his poem of 'The Raven' had awakened a fit of horror in England. . . . He was at this time greatly depressed. Their extreme poverty, the sickness of his wife, and his own inability to write sufficiently accounted for this. . . . We strolled away into the woods, and had a very cheerful time till some one proposed a game of leaping. I think it must have been Poe, as he was expert in the exercise. Two or three gentlemen agreed to leap with him, and though one of them was tall, and had been a hunter in times past, Poe still distanced them all. But, alas! his gaiters, long worn and carefully kept, were both burst in the grand leap that made him victor. . . . I was certain he had no other shoes, boot, or gaiters . . . . if any one had money, who had the effrontery to offer it to the poet?"

This same writer, becoming intimate with the poet, made several visits to Fordham. "The autumn came," he resumes, "and Mrs. Poe sank rapidly in consumption, and I saw her in her bedchamber. Everything here was

so neat, so purely clean, so scant and poverty-stricken. . . . There was no clothing on the bed, which was only straw, but a snow-white spread and sheets. The weather was cold, and the sick lady had the dreadful chills, that accompany the hectic fever of consumption. She lay on the straw bed, wrapped in her husband's greatcoat, with a large tortoiseshell cat in her bosom. The wonderful cat seemed conscious of her great usefulness. The coat and the cat were the sufferer's only means of warmth, except as her husband held her hands, and her mother her feet. Mrs. Clemm was passionately fond of her daughter, and her distress on account of her illness, and poverty, and misery, dreadful to see.

"As soon as I was made aware of these painful facts I came to New York, and enlisted the sympathies and services of a lady whose heart and hand were ever open to the poor and miserable. . . . The lady headed a subscription, and carried them sixty dollars the next week. From the day this kind lady first saw the suffering family of the poet, she watched over them as a mother. She saw them often, and ministered to the comfort of the dying and the living. This same generous lady, who, we believe, was Mrs. Lewis, better known as 'Stella,' subsequently, when the poet died, received Mrs. Clemm into her own house, and sheltered her until she could return to her friends in the South." The author of these "Reminiscences" concludes:—"Poe has been

called a bad man. He was his own enemy, it is true; but he was a gentleman and a scholar. . . . If the scribblers who have snapped like curs at his remains had seen him as his friends saw him, in his dire necessity and his great temptation, they would have been worse than they deem him to have written as they have concerning a man of whom they really knew next to nothing."

When this writer brought the heartrending statement of the poor, proud, and unhappy poet's circumstances—without Poe's knowledge or connivance—before the world, Willis, in an article in the *Home Journal*, made an appeal to the public on the poet's behalf, suggesting, at the same time, that his case was a strong argument in favor of the establishment of an hospital for poor but well-educated persons. His remarks are worth repetition. He says:—"The feeling we have long entertained on this subject has been freshened by a recent paragraph in the *Express*, announcing that Mr. Edgar Allan Poe and his wife were both dangerously ill and suffering for want of the common necessaries of life. Here is one of the finest scholars, one of the most original men of genius, and one of the most industrious of the literary profession of our country, whose temporary suspension of labor, from bodily illness, drops him immediately to a level with the common objects of public charity. There is no intermediate stopping-place—no respectful shelter where, with the delicacy due to genius and

culture, he might secure aid, unadvertised, till, with returning health, he could resume his labors and his unmortified sense of independence. He must either apply to individual friends (a resource to which death is sometimes almost preferable), or *suffer down* to the level where Charity receives claimants, but where Rags and Humiliation are the only recognized ushers to her presence. Is this right? Should there not be in all highly civilized communities an institution designed expressly for educated and refined objects of charity—an hospital, a retreat, a home of seclusion and comfort, the sufficient claims to which would be such susceptibilities as are violated by the above-mentioned appeal in a daily paper?"

This noble and suggestive article of Mr. Willis, Griswold maliciously avers, was but an "ingenious apology for Mr. Poe's infirmities;" and then declares that the following letter, which was written just before Mrs. Poe's death, "was written for effect:"—

"My Dear Willis—The paragraph which has been put in circulation respecting my wife's illness, my own, my property, etc., is now lying before me; together with the beautiful lines by Mrs. Locke and those by Mrs. ——, to which the paragraph has given rise, as well as your kind and manly comments in *The Home Journal*. The motive of the paragraph I leave to the conscience of him or her who wrote it or suggested it. Since the thing is done, however, and since the concerns of my family are thus pitilessly thrust before the public, I perceive no mode of escape from a public statement of what is true and what is erroneous in the report alluded to. That my wife is ill, then, is true; and you may imagine

with what feelings I add, that this illness, hopeless from the first, has been heightened and precipitated by her reception, at two different periods, of anonymous letters —one enclosing the paragraph now in question, the other those published calumnies of Messrs. ———, for which I yet hope to find redress in a court of justice.

"Of the facts, that I myself have been long and dangerously ill, and that my illness has been a well-understood thing among my brethren of the press, the best evidence is afforded by the innumerable paragraphs of personal and of literary abuse with which I have been latterly assailed. This matter, however, will remedy itself. At the very first blush of my new prosperity, the gentlemen who toadied me in the old will recollect themselves and toady me again. . . . That I am 'without friends' is a gross calumny, which I am sure you never could have believed, and which a thousand noble-hearted men would have good right never to forgive for permitting to pass unnoticed and undenied. I do not think, my dear Willis, that there is any need of my saying more. I am getting better, and may add, if it be any comfort to my enemies,—that I have little fear of getting worse. The truth is I have a great deal to do, and I have made up my mind not to die till it is done.

"Sincerely yours,

"EDGAR A. POE.

"December 30, 1846."

Animadverting upon this letter, the implacable Griswold asserts, notwithstanding the positive evidence to the contrary, that Poe "had not been ill a great while, nor dangerously at all; that there was no literary or personal abuse of him in the journals; and that his friends had been applied to for money until their money was nearly exhausted." As already stated, a few weeks after this letter, which this calumniator of the dead declares

"was written for effect," the poet's wife died; and in an autographic letter now before us, Poe positively reiterates the accusation that his wife,—"my poor Virginia, was continually tortured (although not deceived) by anonymous letters, and on her deathbed declared that her life had been shortened by their writer." In January, 1847, the poet's darling wife died, and on a desolate dreary day her remains were interred in a vault in the neighborhood, in accordance with the permission of its owner. The loss of his wife threw Poe into a melancholy stupor which lasted for several weeks; but nature reasserting her powers, he gradually resumed his wonted avocations. During the whole of the year the poet lived a quiet secluded life with his mother-in-law, receiving occasional visits from his friends and admirers; musing over the memory of his lost Lenore, and thinking out the great and crowning work of his life—Eureka. An English friend, who visited the Fordham cottage in early autumn of 1847, and spent several weeks with its inmates, described to Mrs. Whitman its unrivaled neatness and the quaint simplicity of its interior and surroundings. It was, at the time, bordered by a flower-garden, whose clumps of rare dahlias, and brilliant beds of autumnal flowers, showed, in the careful culture bestowed upon them, the fine floral tastes of the presiding spirit.

The attention which Poe gave to his birds and flowers surprised his visitor, who deemed

it inconsistent with the gloom of his writings. Another friend, who visited the cottage during the summer of the same year, describes it as "half-buried in fruit-trees, and as having a thick grove of pines in its immediate neighborhood." "The proximity of the railroad, and the increasing population of the little village," adds Mrs. Whitman, "have since wrought great changes in the place. Round an old cherry-tree, near the door, was a broad bank of greenest turf. The neighboring beds of mignonette and heliotrope, and the pleasant shade above, made this a favorite seat. Rising at four o'clock in the morning, for a walk to the magnificent aqueduct bridge over Harlem River, our informant found the poet, with his mother-in-law, standing on the turf beneath the cherry-tree, eagerly watching the movements of two beautiful birds that seemed contemplating a settlement in its branches. He had some rare tropical birds in cages, which he cherished and petted with assiduous care." "Our English friend," continued Mrs. Whitman, "described Poe as giving to his birds and flowers a delighted attention which seemed quite inconsistent with the gloomy and grotesque character of his writings. A favorite cat, too, enjoyed his friendly patronage, and often when he was engaged in composition it seated itself on his shoulder, purring as if in complacent approval of the work proceeding under its supervision.

"During Poe's residence at Fordham, a

walk to High Bridge was one of his favorite and habitual recreations," remarks Mrs. Whitman, and she describes the lofty and picturesque avenue across the aqueduct, where, in "the lonesome latter years" of his life, the poet was accustomed to walk "at all times of the day and night, often pacing the then solitary pathway for hours without meeting a human being." A rocky ledge in the neighborhood, partly covered with pines and cedars, and commanding a fine view of the surrounding country, was also one of his favorite resorts, and here, resumes our informant, "through long summer days, and through solitary starlit nights, he loved to sit, dreaming his gorgeous waking dreams, or pondering the deep problems of 'the Universe,'—that grand 'prose poem' to which he devoted the last and most matured energies of his wonderful intellect." Towards the close of this "most immemorial year," this year in which he had lost his cousin bride, he wrote his weird monody of "Ulalume." Like so many of his poems it was autobiographical, and, on the poet's own authority, we are informed that it was, "in its basis, although not in the precise correspondence of time, simply historical." It first appeared anonymously in Colton's *American Review* for December, 1847, as "Ulalume: a Ballad," and, being reprinted in the *Home Journal*, by an absurd mistake was ascribed to the editor, N. P. Willis. Subsequently, Mrs. Whitman, being one morning with Poe in the

Providence Athenæum Library, asked him if he had seen the new poem, and if he could tell who had written it. To her surprise he acknowledged himself the author, and, turning to a bound volume of the *Review*, which was on a shelf near by, he wrote his name at the end of the poem, and there, a few months ago, a correspondent found it. The poem originally possessed an additional verse, but, at the suggestion of Mrs. Whitman, Poe subsequently omitted this, and thereby greatly strengthened the effect of the whole. The final and suppressed stanza read thus:

> "Said we then—the two, then—Ah, can it
> Have been that the woodlandish ghouls
> The pitiful, the merciful ghouls—
> To bar up our path and to ban it
> From the secret that lies in these wolds—
> Had drawn up the specter of a planet
> From the limbo of lunary souls—
> This sinfully scintillant planet
> From the Hell of the planetary souls?"

Early in 1848, Poe announced his intention of delivering a series of lectures, with a view to raise a sufficient capital to enable him to start a magazine of his own. In January of this year he thus wrote on the subject to his old and tried friend N. P. Willis:—

"FORDHAM, January 22, 1848.

"MY DEAR MR. WILLIS—I am about to make an effort at re-establishing myself in the literary world, and *feel* that I may depend upon your aid.

"My general aim is to start a magazine, to be called

*The Stylus*; but it would be useless to me, even when established, if not entirely out of the control of a publisher. I mean, therefore, to get up a journal, which shall be *my own*, at all points. With this end in view, I must get a list of at least five hundred subscribers to begin with—nearly two hundred I have already. I propose, however, to go south and west, among my personal and literary friends—old College and West Point acquaintances—and see what I can do. In order to get the means of taking the first step, I propose to lecture at the Society Library, on Thursday, the 3d of February—and, that there may be no cause of *squabbling*, my subject shall *not be literary* at all. I have chosen a broad text —'The Universe.'

"Having thus given you *the facts* of the case, I leave all the rest to the suggestions of your own tact and generosity.—Gratefully, *most* gratefully, your friend always,

"EDGAR A. POE."

This letter was speedily followed by a prospectus, addressed *To the Public*, "*The Stylus*; a Monthly Journal of Literature Proper, the Fine Arts, and the Drama. To be edited by Edgar A. Poe," and from it the most noticeable paragraphs are extracted: "Since resigning the conduct of the *Southern Literary Messenger* at the beginning of its third year, and more especially since retiring from the editorship of *Graham's Magazine* soon after the commencement of its second, I have had always in view the establishment of a monthly journal which should retain one or two of the chief features of the work first mentioned, abandoning or greatly modifying its general character; —but not until now have I felt at liberty to attempt the execution of this design. I shall

be pardoned for speaking more directly of the two magazines in question. Having in neither of them any proprietary right—the objects of their worthy owners, too, being at variance with my own—I found it not only impossible to effect anything, on the score of taste, for their mechanical appearance, but difficult to stamp upon them internally that *individuality* which I believed essential to their success. In regard to the permanent influence of such publications, it appears to me that continuity and a marked certainty of purpose are requisites of vital importance, but attainable only where one mind alone has at least the general control. Experience, to be brief, has shown me that in founding a journal of my own, lies my sole chance of carrying out to completion whatever peculiar intentions I may have entertained.

"These intentions are now as heretofore. It shall be the chief purpose of the magazine proposed to become known as one wherein may be found at all times, on all topics within its legitimate reach, a sincere and fearless opinion. It shall be a leading object to assert in precept and to maintain in practice the rights, while in effect it demonstrates the advantages, of an absolutely independent criticism—a criticism self-sustained; guiding itself only by intelligible laws of art; analyzing these laws as it applies them; holding itself aloof from all personal bias, and acknowledging no fear save that of the right.

"There is no design, however, to make the

journal a critical one solely, or even very especially. It will aim at something *more* than the usual magazine variety, and at affording a fair field for the *true* talent of the land, without reference to the mere *prestige* of name, or the advantages of wordly wisdom. But since the efficiency of the work must in great measure depend upon its definiteness, THE STYLUS will limit itself to *Literature Proper, the Fine Arts, and the Drama.*"

Notwithstanding the large number of his admirers, and the friendly co-operation of Mr. Thomas C. Clarke, who was to have been the publisher, Poe found the minimum number of subscribers necessary to start the magazine very difficult to obtain; he therefore set about his lectures for the purpose of getting "the means of taking the first step."

The first lecture of the series was given in the library of the New York Historical Society; it was upon the cosmogony of the universe, and formed the substance of the work he afterwards published as "Eureka, a Prose Poem." Mr. M. B. Field, who was present, says—"It was a stormy night, and there were not more than sixty persons present in the lecture-room. . . . His lecture was a rhapsody of the most intense brilliancy. He appeared inspired and his inspiration affected the scant audience almost painfully. His eyes seemed to glow like those of his own 'Raven,' and he kept us entranced for two hours and a half." Such small audiences, despite the enthusiasm of the lect-

urer, or the lectured, could not give much material aid towards the poet's purpose. Poor and baffled he had to return to his lonely home at Fordham, to contemplate anew the problems of creation; or to discuss with stray visitors, with an intensity of feeling and steadfastness of belief never surpassed, his unriddling of the secret of the universe.

In the early summer of 1848 we find Poe delivering a lecture at Lowell, on the "Female Poets of America." "In an analysis of the comparative merits of the New England poetesses," says the Hon. James Atkinson, who attended the lecture, "the lecturer awarded to Mrs. Osgood the palm of facility, ingenuity, and grace;—to Mrs. Whitman, a pre-eminence in refinement of art, enthusiasm, imagination, and genius, properly so called;—to Miss Lynch he ascribed an unequaled success in the concentrated and forcible enunciation of the sentiment of heroism and duty." Mrs. Whitman, undoubtedly the finest female poet New England has produced, had been first seen by Poe, says Griswold, "on his way from Boston, when he visited that city to deliver a poem before the Lyceum there. Restless near midnight, he wandered from his hotel near where she lived, until he saw her walking in a garden. He related the incident afterwards in one of his most exquisite poems, worthy of himself, of her, and of the most exalted passion."

"Meanwhile the beautiful young widow

lived on perfectly unconscious of the fierce flame she had aroused in the poet's heart, until, in the beginning of the summer of 1848, about the time of the above lecture, the first intimation reached her in the shape of the beautiful lines, 'To Helen,' alluded to by Griswold, commencing, 'I saw thee once—once only—years ago.' There was no signature to the poem, but the lady was acquainted with Edgar Poe's exquisite handwriting, and therefore knew whence it came. About this time the poet went to Richmond, Virginia, and forming the acquaintance of the late Mr. James Thompson, the talented editorial proprietor of the *Southern Literary Messenger*, agreed to become a contributor to its pages. Mr. Thompson, like all who knew Poe personally, became strongly attached to him, and has left some interesting reminiscences of him. The poet at this period was making many inquiries about Mrs. Whitman, and speaking both publicly and privately in high praise of her poetry, so that at last, even before they met, their names were, as Griswold truthfully states, frequently associated together. One day, says Mr. Thompson, Poe rushed into the office of the *Messenger* in a state of great excitement, sat down and wrote out a challenge to Mr. Daniels, editor of the Richmond *Examiner*, and requested Mr. Thompson to be its bearer to the person challenged! In explanation of his conduct, he handed his friend a paragraph cut from the *Examiner*, giving an account of Poe's

presumed engagement to Mrs. Whitman, and making some comments on the lady's temerity. The enraged poet said he did not care what Daniels might say about him, but that he would not have the lady's name dragged in. Mr. Thompson refused to deliver the challenge, and Poe went personally to see Daniels, and the result was that the offending paragraph was withdrawn. In September of this year, Poe, having obtained a letter of introduction from a lady friend, sought and obtained an interview with Mrs. Whitman. The result of this and several subsequent interviews, was the betrothal of the two poets, notwithstanding the most strenuous opposition of the lady's family. Much as she revered his genius, the opposition of her relatives to the match appears for a time to have caused the lady to withstand the poet's passionate appeals, but ultimately, as stated, they were engaged. The following paragraphs, from a letter written by Poe on the 18th of October of this year, show how intensely he could feel, and how earnestly he could express his feelings as well in private correspondence as in those compositions intended for the public eye:—

"——You do *not* love me, or you would have felt too thorough a sympathy with the sensitiveness of my nature, to have wounded me as you have done with this terrible passage of your letter—'How often I have heard it said of you, "He has great intellectual power, but no principle—no moral sense."'

"Is it possible that such expressions as these could have been repeated to me—to me—by one whom I loved—ah, whom I *love!* . . .

"By the God who reigns in heaven, I swear to you that my soul is incapable of dishonor—that, with the exception of occasional follies and excesses, which I bitterly lament, but to which I have been driven by intolerable sorrow, and which are hourly committed by others without attracting any notice whatever—I can call to mind no act of my life which would bring a blush to my cheek—or to yours. If I have erred at all, in this regard, it has been on the side of what the world would call a Quixotic sense of the honorable—of the chivalrous. The indulgence of this sense has been the true voluptuousness of my life. It was for this species of luxury that in early youth I deliberately threw away from me a large fortune rather than endure a trivial wrong.

"For nearly three years I have been ill, poor, living out of the world; and thus, as I now painfully see, have afforded opportunity to my enemies to slander me in private society without my knowledge, and thus, with impunity. Although much, however, may (and, I now see, must) have been said to my discredit during my retirement, those few who, knowing me well, have been steadfastly my friends, permitted nothing to reach my ears—unless in one instance, of such a character that I could appeal to a court of justice for redress.* . . .

* The Dunn-English libel. (See, *ante*, p. 64.)—*Ed.*

I replied to the charge fully in a public newspaper—afterwards suing the *Mirror* (in which the scandal appeared), obtaining a verdict and receiving such an amount of damages as for the time to completely break up that journal. And do you ask *why* men so *misjudge* me—*why* I have enemies? If your knowledge of my character and of my career does not afford you an answer to the query, at least it does not become *me* to suggest the answer. Let it suffice that I have had the audacity to remain poor, that I might preserve my independence—that, nevertheless, in letters, to a certain extent, and in certain regards, I have been 'successful,'—that I have been a critic—an unscrupulously honest, and, no doubt, in many cases a bitter one—that I have uniformly attacked—where I attacked at all—those who stood highest in power and influence; and that, whether in literature or society, I have seldom refrained from expressing, either directly or indirectly, the pure contempt with which the pretensions of ignorance, arrogance, or imbecility inspire me. And you who know all this, *you* ask me *why* I have enemies. . . . Forgive me if there be bitterness in my tone." . . .

The man who could write thus, it is impossible not to feel, *must* have been sincere; must have been incapable of committing the mean, the dishonoring actions, placed by an envious and jealous writer to his charge.

In a letter addressed to the same dear friend, and dated the 24th of November, 1848, Poe

exhibits his epistolary powers in quite a different light. After certain matters of a private nature he remarks :—

"Your lines 'To Arcturus' are truly beautiful. I would retain the Virgilian words, omitting the translation. The first note leave out. 61 Cygni has been proved *nearer* than Arcturus, and Alpha Lyræ is presumably so. Bessel also has shown six other stars to be *nearer* than the brighter ones of this hemisphere. There is an obvious tautology in 'pale candescent.' To be *candescent* is to become *white* with heat. Why not read —'To blend with thine its incandescent fire?' Forgive me, *sweet* Helen, for these *very* stupid and captious criticisms. Take vengeance on my next poem. When 'Ulalume' appears, cut it out and enclose it—newspapers seldom reach me. In last Saturday's *Home Journal* is a letter from M. C. (who is it?). I enclose a passage which seems to refer to my lines—

'—the very roses' odors,
Died in the arms of the adoring airs.'

The accusation will enable you to see how groundless such accusations *may* be, even when seemingly best founded. Mrs. H.'s book was published three months ago. You had my poem about the 1st of June—was it not?—Forever your own.

"EDGAR.

"Remember me to Mr. Pabodie."

The Mr. Pabodie referred to was a great friend of Poe's, and as it will be necessary to speak of him again, to show the terms upon which the two lived, the following otherwise unimportant letter is quoted:

"FORDHAM, December, '48.

"MY DEAR MR. PABODIE—On the principal of 'better late than never,' I seize the first opportunity afforded me, in the midst of cares and vexations of all kinds, to

write you a few words of cordial thanks for your considerate and gentlemanly attentions to me while in Providence. I do hope that you will always think of me as one of the most obliged and most devoted of your friends. Please say to Mrs. W., when you next see her, that I thank her for the 'papers,' and for her promptitude. Say, also, that perhaps Mrs. Wright is right, but that I believe her wrong, and desire to be kindly remembered. The commands about post have been attended to. Present my respects to Mrs. Allan and to your father.—Truly yours always.

"EDGAR ALLAN POE.

"W. J. PABODIE, ESQ."

In the very month this letter was written Poe's engagement with Mrs. Whitman came to an end. The real cause of the rupture between the poet and his betrothed has never been published, although it is to be hoped that, for the sake of the much slandered dead, the seal of silence will some day be broken. It is impossible to impute blame to either of the parties concerned, as undoubtedly the true cause of the separation arose from circumstances beyond their control. According to the diabolical story told by Griswold, and since repeated in nearly every memoir of the poet, on the evening before what should have been the bridal morn, Poe committed such drunken outrages at the house of his affianced bride that it was found necessary to summon the police to eject him, which of course ended the engagement. This misstatement being brought under the notice of the parties concerned, Mr. Pabodie wrote a direct and specific denial of it to the *New York Tribune*, and it appeared in that paper on the

7th of June, 1852. "I am authorized to say," remarks Mr. Pabodie, who, it should be mentioned, was an eminent lawyer as well as a man of considerable literary ability, "I am authorized to say, not only from my personal knowledge, but also from the statement of ALL who were conversant with the affair, that there exists not a shadow of foundation for the story above alluded to." The same letter goes on to state that its writer knew Poe well, and at the time alluded to was with him daily. "I was acquainted with the circumstances of his engagement, and with the causes which led to its dissolution," continues Mr. Pabodie; and he concludes his letter with an earnest appeal to Griswold to do all that now lies in his power "to remove an undeserved stigma from the memory of the departed." An honorable man would have acknowledged the incorrectness of his information, and have done his best to obviate the consequences of his accusation. Not so this biographer; he wrote a savage letter to Mr. Pabodie, threatening terrible things if he did not withdraw his statement. Mr. Pabodie did not withdraw, but, in another letter to Griswold, brought forward incontrovertible proofs of other falsifications indulged in by the author of the "Memoir," who henceforward remained discreetly silent.

During the larger portion of 1848, Poe continued his studies, which at this period were chiefly philosophical, at his home at Fordham. Beyond a few reviews, he would appear to

have given his whole time to the completion of "Eureka," the last and grandest monument of his genius. The merits of this wonderful "prose poem" this is neither the time nor the place to discuss; and it suffices now to point out that in all probability no other author ever flung such an intensity of feeling, or ever believed more steadfastly in the truth of his work, than did Edgar Poe in this attempted unriddling of the secret of the universe. He was wont to discuss the various knotty points of "Eureka" with a startling eloquence that electrified his hearers into belief. He could not submit to hear the claims of his work discussed by unsympathetic and incompetent critics, and after it was published in book form, and thus made general property, he addressed this thoroughly characteristic letter to Mr. C. F. Hoffman, then editor of the *Literary World*, anent a flippant critique of "Eureka" which had appeared in the columns of that publication.

"DEAR SIR—In your paper of July 29, I find some comments on 'Eureka,' a late book of my own, and I know you too well to suppose for a moment that you will refuse me the privilege of a few words in reply. I feel even that I might safely claim from Mr. Hoffman the right which every author has, of replying to his critic *tone for tone*,—that is to say, of answering your correspondent's flippancy by flippancy, and sneer by sneer,—but, in the first place, I do not wish to disturb the 'World,' and in the second, I feel that I should never be done sneering in the present instance were I once to begin. Lamartine blames Voltaire for the use which he made of misrepresentations (*ruses*) in his attacks on the

priesthood; but our young students of theology do not seem to be aware that in defense, or what they fancy to be defense, of Christianity, there is anything wrong in such gentlemanly peccadilloes as the deliberate perversion of an author's text—to say nothing of the minor *indecora* of reviewing a book without it, and without having the faintest suspicion of what it is about.

"You will understand that it is merely the *misrepresentations* of the *critique* in question to which I claim the privilege of reply; the mere *opinions* of the writer can be of no consequence to me—and I should imagine of very little to himself—that is to say, if he knows himself personally as well as I have the honor of knowing him. The first misrepresentation is contained in this sentence:—'This letter is a keen burlesque on the Aristotelian or Baconian method of ascertaining Truth, both of which the writer ridicules and despises, and pours forth his rhapsodical ecstasies in a glorification of a third mode—the noble art of *guessing*.' What I *really* say is this:—'That there is no absolute certainty either in the Aristotelian or Baconian process; that for this reason neither philosophy is so profound as it fancies itself, and that neither has a right to sneer at that seemingly imaginative process called Intuition (by which the great Kepler attained his laws), since "Intuition," after all, is but the conviction arising from those inductions or deductions, of which the processes are so shadowy as to escape our consciousness, elude our reason, or defy our capacity of expression.' The second misrepresentation runs thus:—'The developments of electricity and the formation of stars and suns, luminous and non-luminous, moons and planets, with their rings, etc., is deduced, very much according to the nebular theory of Laplace, from the principle propounded above.' Now, the impression intended to be made here upon the reader's mind by the 'Student of Theology' is, evidently, that my theory may be all very well in its way, but that it is nothing but Laplace over again with some modifications that he (the Student of Theology) cannot regard as at all important. I have only to say that no gentleman can accuse me of the disingenuousness here implied; inas-

much as, having proceeded with my theory to that point at which Laplace's theory *meets it* I then *give Laplace's theory in full*, with the expression of my firm conviction of its absolute truth *at all points*. The *ground* covered by the great French astronomer compares with that covered by my theory, as a bubble compares with the ocean on which it floats; nor has he the slightest allusion to 'the principle propounded above,' the principle of Unity being the source of all things—the principle of Gravity being merely the Reaction of the Divine Act which irradiated all things from Unity. In fact, *no* point *of my* theory has been even so much as alluded to by Laplace. I have not considered it necessary here to speak of the astronomical knowledge displayed in the 'stars *and* suns' of the Student of Theology, nor to hint that it would be better grammar to say that 'development and formation' *are* than that development and formation *is*. The third misrepresentation lies in a foot-note, where the critic says:—'Further than this, Mr. Poe's claim that he can account for the existence of all organized beings—man included—merely from those principles on which the origin and present appearance of suns and worlds are explained, must be set down as mere bold assertion, without a particle of evidence. In others words, we should term it *arrant fudge*.' The perversion of this point is involved in a willful misapplication of the word 'principles.' I say 'willful' because at page 63 I am *particularly* carefully to distinguish between the principles proper—Attraction and Repulsion—and those merely resultant *sub*-principles which control the universe in detail. To these sub-principles, swayed by the immediate spiritual influence of Deity, I leave, without examination, *all that* which the Student of Theology so roundly asserts I account for on the *principles* which account for the constitution of suns, etc. . . . . .

"Were these 'misrepresentations,' (*is* that the name for them ?) made for any less serious a purpose than that of branding my book as 'impious,' and myself as a 'pantheist,' a 'polytheist,' a Pagan, or a God knows what (and, indeed, I care very little, so it be not a 'Student of Theology'), I would have permitted their dishonesty

to pass unnoticed, through pure contempt for the boyishness, for the *turn-down-shirt-collarness* of their tone; but, as it is, you will pardon me, Mr. Editor, that I have been compelled to expose a 'critic' who, courageously preserving his own *anonymousity*, takes advantage of my absence from the city to misrepresent, and thus vilify me, *by nan*

"EDGAR A. POE.

"FORDHAM, September 20, 1848."

During the last year of his life Poe saw much of Mrs. Estelle Lewis, already alluded to as "Stella," and he and his aunt both received much kindness from that accomplished woman. His exalted critique on her writings originally appeared in the *Messenger*, in 1848, and in the same year he published the poem to her entitled "An Enigma," but through an unfortunate mistake he mistook her Christian name, and wrought into his lines "Sarah" instead of "Estelle." Lying before us, in his beautiful caligraphy, is this little note announcing its production:—

"27th November, 1848.

"DEAR MRS. LEWIS—A thousand thanks for your repeated kindness, and above all for the comforting and cheering words of your note, Your advice I feel as a command which neither my heart nor my reason would venture to disobey. May heaven for ever bless you and yours!

"A day or two ago I sent to one of the magazines the sonnet enclosed. Its tone is somewhat too light, but it embodies a riddle which I put you to the trouble of expounding. Will you try? Your always.

"EDGAR A. POE."

The winter of 1848–49, and the spring of the

latter year, Poe passed at Fordham, and during this time he is alleged to have written a book entitled *Phases of American Literature;* Mr. M. A. Daly states that he saw the complete work, but the manuscript would seem to have disappeared. After Poe's death the larger portion of his papers passed through Griswold's hands, and his manipulation of them will, doubtless, account for all deficiencies and shortcomings. In the summer, Poe revisited Richmond, and spent between two and three months there, during which time he delivered two lectures, in the Exchange Concert-Room, on "The Poetic Principle."

"When in Richmond," says Mr. Thompson, "he made the office of the *Messenger* a place of frequent resort. His conversation was always attractive, and at times very brilliant. Among modern authors his favorite was Tennyson, and he delighted to recite from 'The Princess,' the song, 'Tears, idle Tears'—and a fragment of which—

> "'When unto dying eyes
> The casement slowly grows a glimmering square,'"

he pronounced unsurpassed by any image expressed in writing." For Mr. Thompson, whom he inspired with an affection similar to that with which he inspired all with whom he had personal dealings, he wrote a quantity of his sparkling and vivid "Marginalia," as well as reviews of "Stella" (Mrs. Lewis) and of Mrs. Osgood. To his probity and general

worth, Mr. Thompson, who undoubtedly saw more of him in his latter days than any person not a relative, bears affectionate testimony. Writing to Mr. James Wood Davidson, in 1853, he remarks :—"Two years ago I had a long conversation in Florence with Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning concerning Poe. The two poets, like yourself, had formed an ardent and just admiration of the author of 'The Raven,' and feel a strong desire to see his memory vindicated from moral aspersion." Unfortunately the vindication has been slower than the aspersion to make its way in the world.

The poet had not been long in Richmond on this occasion of his final visit before it was rumored that he was engaged to the love of his youth, Mrs. Shelton, who was now a widow. He never alluded in any way to such an engagement to his friend Mr. Thompson, intimate as he was with him, but there would appear to have been some truth in the report, and on the news of Poe's death Mrs. Shelton went into mourning for him. On the 4th of October he left Richmond by train, with the intention, it is supposed, of going to Fordham to fetch Mrs. Clemm. Before his departure he complained to a friend of indisposition, of chilliness and exhaustion, but, notwithstanding, determined to undertake the journey. He left the train at Baltimore, and some hours later was discovered in the street insensible. How he had been taken ill no one really knows, and all the absurd reports circulated about his last mo-

ments were absolute inventions. He was dying when found, and, being unknown, was taken at once to the Hospital, where he died on Sunday the 7th of October, 1849, of inflammation of the brain, insensible, it is supposed, to the last. The following day he was buried in the burial ground of Westminster Church, close by the grave of his grandfather, General David Poe. No stone marks the spot where he lies.*

In telling the true story of this poet's life it is impossible to utterly ignore the fact—a fact of which his enemies have made so much—that towards the close of his melancholy career, sorrow and chronic pecuniary embarrassment drove him to the use of stimulants, as affording the only procurable nepenthe for his troubles. "A less delicate organization than his," remarks one of his acquaintances, "might have borne without injury what to him was maddening." "I have absolutely *no* pleasure in the stimulants in which I sometimes so madly indulge," he wrote some months before his death to a dear friend who tried to hold forth a saving hope. "It has not been in the pursuit of pleasure that I have periled life and reputation and reason. It has been in the desperate attempt to escape from torturing memories—memories of wrong and injustice and imputed dishonor—from a sense of insupportable loneliness and a dread of some strange impending

* Written before the Poe monument was erected.

doom." There is no necessity for us to touch heavily upon this terrible *trait* in the character of Edgar Poe—this sad sickening infirmity of his "lonesome latter years;" his error, if such it may be styled—the impulse which blindly impelled him to his destruction—injured no one but himself; and certainly, no one before or since has suffered so severely in character in consequence of it. Burns, Goethe, Byron, and other children of genius have erred far worse than Poe ever did, inasmuch as their derelictions injured others, but with them the world has dealt leniently, accepting *their* genius as a compensation. But for poor Edgar Poe, who wronged no one but himself, the world, misled greatly it is true as to his real character, has hitherto had no mercy. But the true story of his life has now been told; henceforth let him be judged justly; henceforth let his few errors be forgotten, and to his name be assigned that place which is due to it in the glory-roll of fame.

The history of Edgar Allan Poe can scarcely be said to have ended with his life. Two days after his death a cruel deprecatory notice of his life and works appeared in the *New York Tribune*, and this notice, which was signed "Ludwig," after declaring that the poet's decease "will startle many, but few will be grieved by it," as "he had few or no friends," proceeds to furnish a sketch of Poe's life, taken professedly from Griswold's "Poets and Poetry of America." Thanks to N. P. Willis, it trans-

pired that this notice was by Griswold himself —he was the pseudonymous "Ludwig." The papers were immediately flooded with disproofs of this characterization of Poe, and friend after friend came forward to defend the dead man against his assailant. Willis led the van with his well-known and already alluded to paper, in which he recorded his own personal knowledge of Edgar Poe, derived from five years' intimate acquaintanceship. Mr. George R. Graham, the originator and proprietor of the well-known *Graham's Magazine*, next proceeded to denounce, in what Griswold styles "a sophomorical and trashy, but widely circulated letter," the notice as "an immortal infamy," and probably knowing better than any one else the position which his rival editors stood in with respect to one another, declared it to be the "fancy sketch of a *perverted jaundiced vision*." John Neal also came forward to assert that it was "false and malicious," and its author a "calumniator," between whom and Poe existed "a long, intense, and implacable enmity," that utterly disqualified Griswold for the post of the poet's biographer. Undaunted by the outcry he had created, Griswold proceeded to the manufacture of that masterpiece of envy, hatred, and malice, which, under the title of a "Memoir of Edgar Poe," he attempted to foist upon the world as a truthful life of America's greatest and most original genius. Doubted, refuted, and condemned, as it has been in America,

where Griswold's own disreputable career was but too notorious to be ignored, the *soi-disant* "Memoir" still remains even there the only story of Poe's life, whilst in Europe it has been unwittingly and almost universally accepted as the truth. In France, indeed, it has been attacked by Baudelaire, who pointed out its author's evident animosity to Poe; and in England, Mr. Moy Thomas * drew attention to the fact that portraitures of Poe, less repulsive than that given by Griswold, were in existence; as a rule, however, it has been received as a faithful story.

In the preceding "Memoir" an attempt has been made for the first time to do justice to the poet's memory. Many of the dark stains which Griswold cast upon it have been removed, and those which remain, resting as they do solely upon the testimony of an implacable enemy, may safely be ignored as, in the mild words of Mrs. Whitman, "perverted facts and baseless assumptions."

It does not come within the scope of our present purpose to investigate the peculiarities of Poe's genius, or to analyze the varied excellencies of his works. There are, however, some misconceptions with regard to his literary labors which, founded as they almost invariably are upon Griswold's authority, we should like to draw attention to. Says this biographer, and the remark has been frequently

* *The Train Magazine*, No. 16, vol. iii., pp. 193, etc.

copied, word for word, "Poe exhibits scarcely any virtue in either his life or his writings. Probably there is not another instance in the literature of our language in which so much has been accomplished without a recognition of a manifestation of CONSCIENCE." As regards Poe's life, the world can now judge anew whilst, as regards his writings, we demand in what works of fiction are more fully recognized and more vividly portrayed the unappeasable tortures and the immutable punishments of conscience, than in such tales as "The Man of the Crowd," "The Tell-Tale Heart," and "William Wilson"—the very personification of conscience itself? Can any but willful blindness affect to ignore such terrible examples of a high and unavoidable retribution? Who, too, having read Poe's writings, can adopt Griswold's dictum that they "never display reverence or remorse." No one ever expressed a greater "reverence" for all that is truly great and noble than did Poe, whilst, as for "remorse," it has yet to be proved that *that* was needed in his case. With Griswold's mere *opinion*, that Poe failed in everything he attempted, we have nothing to do, nor does it concern us that *he* deemed him "not remarkably original in invention;" but when he proceeds to charge him with wholesale robbery, and avers that "some of his plagiarisms are scarcely parallel for their audacity," silence could not but be misconstrued. Of the instances which the biographer gives of the alleged literary thefts of

him whom he styles "this extraordinary creature," we have already examined and disproved the two chief, the "Conchology" and "The Haunted Palace" charges; and there only remains the accusation that "the complicate machinery upon which the interest depends" of "The Pit and the Pendulum" is borrowed from a story entitled "Vivenzio," which appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine*. This tale was published in August, 1830, and it is to be wished that any one placing the slightest reliance upon Griswold's credibility will compare the two, the only similarity being due to the fact that both stories derive from historical record the idea of a collapsing room. Mr. Mudford's tale of "The Iron Shroud" does not bear the slightest resemblance in plot or treatment to Poe's.

To support a general charge of inconsistency in Poe's criticisms, the implacable biographer adduces two instances; the first, referring to Mr. Laughton Osborn, has already been refuted in our account of Poe's connection with the *Literary Messenger*, and the second, relating to Mr. William A. Jones, it is quite as easy to disprove. In this latter instance, Griswold gives a short extract from a paper on "Critics and Criticism," in which Poe awards a few words of lukewarm praise to Mr. Jones, and in opposition to this he then quotes a few *garbled* sentences from the *Broadway Journal*, in which the same writer is condemned in no very measured terms. The story is too long and

too uninteresting for recapitulation, but those who are sufficiently curious to learn the whole truth can find it in full at pages 168 and 183 of the second volume of the above journal: it suffices to say that Poe's published opinion of Mr. Jones was consistently alike upon the two occasions referred to. But it is as unnecessary as it is distasteful to pursue this subject further; we have said enough to prove the unreliability of Griswold's "Memoir of Edgar Poe," and in conclusion will content ourselves with reproducing Mr. Graham's interesting and oft referred to letter, as the valuable and unbiased evidence of an unimpeachable witness, the employer of both Poe and Griswold. It appeared in *Graham's Magazine* for March, 1850.

"My dear Willis:—In an article of yours, which accompanies the two beautiful volumes of the writings of Edgar Allan Poe, you have spoken with so much truth and delicacy of the deceased, and with the magical touch of genius have called so warmly up before me the memory of our lost friend, as you and I both seem to have known him, that I feel warranted in addressing to you the few plain words I have to say in defense of his character as set down by Mr. Griswold. Although the article, it seems, appeared originally in the *New York Tribune*, it met my eye for the first time in the volumes before me. I now purpose to take exception to it in the most public manner. I knew Mr. Poe well—far better than Mr. Gris-

wold; and by the memory of old times, when he was an editor of 'Graham,' I pronounce this exceedingly ill-timed and unappreciative estimate of the character of our lost friend *unfair* and *untrue*. It is Mr. Poe, as seen by the writer while laboring under a fit of the nightmare; but so dark a picture has no resemblance to the *living* man. Accompanying these beautiful volumes, it is an immortal—the death's head over the entrance to the garden of beauty—a horror that clings to the brow of morning, whispering of murder. It haunts the memory through every page of his writings, leaving upon the heart a sensation of utter gloom, a feeling almost of terror. The only relief we feel is in knowing that it is not true—that it is a fancy sketch of a perverted, jaundiced vision. The man who could deliberately say of Edgar Allan Poe, in a notice of his life and writings, prefacing the volumes which were to become a priceless souvenir to all who loved him—that his death might startle many, '*but that few would be grieved by it*'—and blast the whole fame of the man by such a paragraph as follows, is a judge dishonored. He is not Mr. Poe's peer, and I challenge him before the country, even as a juror in the case.

"'His harsh experience had deprived him of all faith in man or woman. He had made up his mind upon the numberless complexities of the social world, and the whole system with him was an imposture. This conviction gave a direction to his shrewd and naturally unamiable character. Still, though he regarded society as

*composed altogether of villains*, the sharpness of his intellect was not of that kind which enabled him to cope with villainy, while it continually caused him by overshots to fail of the success of honesty. He was in many respects like Francis Vivian in Bulwer's novel of "The Caxtons." Passion, in him, comprehended many of the worst emotions which militate against human happiness. You could not contradict him, but you raised quick choler; *you could not speak of wealth, but his cheek paled with gnawing envy.* The astonishing natural advantages of this poor boy—his beauty, his readiness, the daring spirit that breathed around him like a fiery atmosphere—had raised his constitutional self-confidence into an arrogance that turned his very claims to admiration into prejudices against him. *Irascible, envious—bad enough*, but not the worst, for these salient angles were all varnished over with a cold repellent cynicism, his passions vented themselves in sneers. *There seemed to him no more susceptibility; and what was more remarkable in a proud nature, little or nothing of the true point of honor.* He had, to a morbid excess, that desire to rise which is vulgarly called ambition, but no wish for the esteem or the love of his species; only the hard wish to succeed—not shine, nor serve—succeed, that he might have the right to despise a world which galled his self-conceit.'

"Now, this is dastardly, and what is worse, it is false. It is very adroitly done, with phrases very well turned, and with gleams of truth shining out from a setting so dusky as to look devilish. Mr. Griswold does not feel the worth of the man he has undervalued—he had no sympathies in common with him, and has allowed old prejudices and old enmities to steal, insensibly perhaps, into the coloring of his picture. They were for years totally uncongenial, if not enemies, and during that

period Mr. Poe, in a scathing lecture upon 'The Poets of America,' gave Mr. Griswold some raps over the knuckles of force sufficient to be remembered. He had, too, in the exercise of his functions as critic, put to death summarily the literary reputation of some of Mr. Griswold's best friends; and their ghosts cried in vain for him to avenge them during Poe's lifetime—and it almost seems as if the present hacking at the cold remains of him who struck them down is a sort of compensation for duty long delayed—for reprisal long desired but deferred. But without this—the opportunities afforded Mr. Griswold to estimate the character of Poe occurred, in the main, after his stability had been wrecked, his whole nature in a degree changed, and with all his prejudices aroused and active. Nor do I consider Mr. Griswold *competent*—with all the opportunities he may have cultivated or acquired—to act as his judge—to dissect that subtle and singularly fine intellect—to probe the motives and weigh the actions of that proud heart. His whole nature—that distinctive presence of the departed which now stands impalpable, yet in strong outline before me, as I knew him and *felt* him to be—eludes the rude grasp of a mind so warped and uncongenial as Mr. Griswold's.

"But it may be said, my dear Willis, that Mr. Poe himself deputed him to act as his literary executor, and that he must have felt some confidence in his ability at least—if not in his integrity—to perform the functions im-

posed with discretion and honor. I do not purpose, now, to enter into any examination of the appointment of Mr. Griswold—nor of the wisdom of his appointment—to the solemn trust of handing the fair fame of the deceased unimpaired to that posterity to which the dying poet bequeathed his legacy—but simply to question its faithful performance. Among the true friends of Poe in this city—and he had some such here—there are those I am sure that *he* did not class among *villains;* nor do *they* feel easy when they see their old friend dressed out, in his grave, in the habiliments of a scoundrel. There is something to them, in this mode of procedure on the part of the literary executor, that does not chime in with their notions of 'the true point of honor.' They had all of them looked upon our departed friend as singularly indifferent to wealth for its own sake, but as very positive in his opinions that the scale of social merit was not of the highest—that MIND, somehow, was apt to be left out of the estimate altogether—and partaking somewhat of his free way of thinking, his friends are startled to find they have entertained very unamiable convictions. As to his 'quick choler' when he was contradicted, it depended a good deal upon the party denying, as well as upon the subject discussed. He was quick, it is true, to perceive mere quacks in literature, and somewhat apt to be hasty when pestered with them; but upon most other questions his natural amiability was not

easily disturbed. Upon a subject that he understood thoroughly he felt some right to be positive, if not arrogant, when addressing pretenders. His 'astonishing natural advantages' *had* been very assiduously cultivated—his daring spirit was the anointed of genius—his self-confidence the proud conviction of both—and it was with something of a lofty scorn that he *attacked*, as well as repelled, a crammed scholar of the hour, who attempted to palm upon him his ill-digested learning. Literature with him was religion; and he, its high-priest, with a whip of scorpions scourged the money-changers from the temple. In all else he had the docility and kind-heartedness of a child. No man was more quickly touched by a kindness—none more prompt to atone for an injury. For three or four years I knew him intimately, and for eighteen months saw him almost daily; much of the time writing or conversing at the same desk; knowing all his hopes, his fears, and little annoyances of life, as well as his high-hearted struggle with adverse fate—yet he was always the same polished gentleman—the quiet, unobtrusive, thoughtful scholar—the devoted husband—frugal in his personal expenses—punctual and unwearied in his industry—*and the soul of honor* in all his transactions. This, of course, was in his better days, and by them *we* judge the man. But even after his habits had changed, there was no literary man to whom I would more readily advance money for labor to be done. He kept his accounts,

small as they were, with the accuracy of a banker. I append an account sent to me in his own hand long after he had left Philadelphia, and after all knowledge of the transactions it recited had escaped my memory. I had returned him the story of 'The Gold Bug,' at his own request, as he found that he could dispose of it very advantageously elsewhere.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| "'We were square when I sold you the "Versification" article; for which you gave me first $25, and afterwards $7—in all . . . . . | | $32 00 |
| Then you bought the "Gold Bug" for . . | | 52 00 |
| I got both these back, so that I owed . . . | | $84 00 |
| You lent Mrs. Clemm . . . . . | | 12 50 |
| Making in all . . . . . | | $96 50 |
| The review of "Flaccus" was 3¾ pp., which, at $4, is . . . . . | $15 00 | |
| Lowell's poem is . . . . . | 10 00 | |
| The review of Channing, 4 pp., is $16, of which I got $6, leaving . . . | 10 00 | |
| The review of Halleck, 4 pp., is $16, of which I got $10, leaving . . . . | 6 00 | |
| The review of Reynolds, 2 pp. . . . | 8 00 | |
| The review of Longfellow, 5 pp., is $20, of which I got $10, leaving . . . | 10 00 | |
| So I paid in all . . . . . | | 59 00 |
| Which leaves still due by me . . . | | $37 50 |

"This, I find, was his uniform habit with others as well as myself—carefully recalling to mind his indebtedness, with the fresh article sent. And this is the man who had 'no moral susceptibility,' and little or nothing of the

'true point of honor.' It may be a very plain business view of the question, but it strikes his friends that it may pass as something as times go.

"I shall never forget how solicitous of the happiness of his wife and mother-in-law he was, whilst one of the editors of *Graham's Magazine*—his whole efforts seemed to be to procure the comfort and welfare of his home. Except for their happiness—and the natural ambition of having a magazine of his own—I never heard him deplore the want of wealth. The truth is, he cared little for money, and knew less of its value, for he seemed to have no personal expenses. What he received from me in regular monthly installments went directly into the hands of his mother-in-law for family comforts—and *twice* only I remember his purchasing some rather expensive luxuries for his house, and then he was nervous to the degree of misery until he had, by extra articles, covered what he considered an imprudent indebtedness. His love for his wife was a sort ot rapturous worship of the spirit of beauty which he felt was fading before his eyes. I have seen him hovering around her when she was ill, with all the fond fear and tender anxiety of a mother of her first-born—her slightest cough causing him a shudder, a heart-chill that was visible. I rode out one summer evening with them, and the remembrance ot his watchful eyes, eagerly bent upon the slightest change of hue in that loved face,

haunts me yet as the memory of a sad strain. It was this hourly *anticipation* of her loss that made him a sad and thoughtful man, and lent a mournful melody to his undying song.

"It is true that later in life Poe had much of those morbid feelings which a life of poverty and disappointment is so apt to engender in the heart of man—the sense of having been ill-used, misunderstood, and put aside by men of far less ability and of none, which preys upon the heart and clouds the brain of many a child of song: a consciousness of the inequalities of life and of the abundant power of mere wealth allied even to vulgarity to over-ride all distinctions, and to thrust itself bedaubed with dirt and glittering with tinsel into the high places of society, and the chief seats of the synagogue; whilst he, a worshiper of the beautiful and true, who listened to the voices of angels, and held delighted companionship with them as the cold throng swept disdainfully by him, was often in danger of being thrust out houseless, homeless, beggared upon the world, with all his fine feelings strung to a tension of agony when he thought of his beautiful and delicate wife dying hourly before his eyes. What wonder that he then poured out the vials of a long-treasured bitterness upon the injustice and hollowness of all society around him?

"The very natural question—'Why did he not work and thrive?' is easily answered. It will not be *asked* by the many who know the

precarious tenure by which literary men hold a mere living in this country. The avenues through which they can profitably reach the country are few, and crowded with aspirants for bread as well as fame. The unfortunate tendency to cheapen every literary work to the lowest point of beggarly flimsiness in price and profit prevents even the well-disposed from extending anything like an adequate support to even a part of the great throng which genius, talent, education, and even misfortune force into the struggle. The character of Poe's mind was of such an order as not to be very widely in demand. The class of educated mind which he could readily and profitably address was small—the channels through which he could do so at all were few—and publishers all, or nearly all, contented with such pens as were already engaged, hesitated to incur the expense of his to an extent which would sufficiently remunerate him; hence, when he was fairly at sea, connected permanently with no publication, he suffered all the horrors of prospective destitution, with scarcely the ability of providing for immediate necessities; and at such moments, alas! the tempter often came, and as you have truly said, '*one glass*' of wine made him a madman. Let the moralist who stands upon 'tufted carpet,' and surveys his smoking board, the fruits of his individual toil or mercantile adventure, pause before he lets the anathema, trembling upon his lips, fall upon a man like Poe! who,

wandering from publisher to publisher, with his fine print-like manuscript, scrupulously clean and neatly rolled, finds no market for his brain—with despair at heart, misery ahead for himself and his loved ones, and gaunt famine dogging at his heels, thus sinks by the wayside, before the demon that watches his steps and whispers OBLIVION. Of all the miseries which God, or his own vices, inflict upon man, none are so terrible as that of having the strong and willing arm struck down to a child-like inefficiency, while the Heart and Will have the purpose and force of a giant's outdoing. We must remember, too, that the very organization of such a mind as that of Poe—the very tension and tone of his exquisitely strung nerves—the passionate yearnings of his soul for the beautiful and true, utterly unfitted him for the rude jostlings and fierce competitorship of trade. The only drafts of his that could be honored were those upon his brain. The unpeopled air—the caverns of ocean—the decay and mystery that hang around old castles—the thunder of wind through the forest aisles—the spirits that rode the blast, by all but him unseen—and the deep metaphysical creations which floated through the chambers of his soul were his only wealth, the High Change where only his signature was valid for rubies.

"Could he have stepped down and chronicled small beer, made himself the shifting toady of the hour, and with bow and cringe hung

upon the steps of greatness, sounding the glory of third-rate ability with a penny trumpet, he would have been fêted alive and *perhaps* been praised when dead. But no! his views of the duties of the critic were stern, and he felt that in praising an unworthy writer he committed dishonor. His pen was regulated by the highest sense of DUTY. By a keen analysis he separated and studied each piece which the skillful mechanist had put together. No part, however insignificant, or apparently unimportant, escaped the rigid and patient scrutiny of his sagacious mind. The unfitted joint proved the bungler—the slightest blemish was a palpable fraud. He was the scrutinizing lapidary, who detected and exposed the most minute flaw in diamonds. The gem of first water shone the brighter for the truthful setting of his calm praise. He had the finest touch of soul for beauty—a delicate and hearty appreciation of worth. If his praise appeared tardy, it was of priceless value when given. It was true as well as sincere. It was the stroke of honor that at once knighted the receiver. It was in the world of MIND that he was king; and with a fierce audacity he felt and proclaimed himself autocrat. As critic he was Despotic, Supreme. Yet no man with more readiness would soften a harsh expression at the request of a friend, or if he himself felt that he had infused too great a degree of bitterness into his article, none would more readily soften it down after it was in type—

though still maintaining the justness of his critical views. I do not believe that he wrote to give pain; but in combating what he conceived to be error, he used the strongest word that presented itself, even in conversation. He labored not so much to reform as to *exterminate* error, and thought the shortest process was to pull it up by the roots.

"He was a worshiper of INTELLECT—longing to grasp the power of mind that moves the stars—to bathe his soul in the dreams of seraphs. He was himself all ethereal, of a fine essence, that moved in an atmosphere of spirits —of spiritual beauty overflowing and radiant —twin brother with the angels, feeling their flashing wings upon his heart, and almost clasping them in his embrace. Of them, and as an expectant archangel of that high order of intellect, stepping out of himself as it were, and interpreting the time he reveled in delicious luxury in a world beyond, with an audacity which we fear in madmen, but in genius worship as the inspiration of heaven.

"But my object in throwing together a few thoughts upon the character of Edgar Allan Poe was not to attempt an elaborate criticism, but to say what might palliate grave faults that have been attributed to him, and to meet by facts unjust accusation—in a word, to give a mere outline of the man as he lived before me. I think I am warranted in saying to Mr. Griswold, that he must review his decision. It will not stand the calm scrutiny of his own

judgment, or of time, while it must be regarded by all the friends of Mr. Poe as an ill-judged and misplaced calumny upon that gifted Son of Genius.

"Yours truly,
"GEO. R. GRAHAM

"PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 2, 1850.

"To N. P. WILLIS, Esq."

See news-slip also at end of Vol.

"Two mighty spirits dwelt in him:
One a wild demon, weird and dim,
The darkness of whose ebon wings
Did shroud unutterable things;
One a fair angel, in the skies
Of whose serene, unshadowed eyes
Were seen the lights of Paradise."

This was Paul Hamilton Hayne's summary of the character of Edgar Allan Poe—a man whose whole life was a strange mixture of joy and sorrow, hope and despair, sin and bitterness, but illumined here and there with flashes of genius which, casting about him a weird mantle of brilliancy, make him the most fascinating writer in all the world's literature. He was a man who knew all the sorrow sin can bring, whose life was brought to a premature end by its consequences, yet who will be remembered for centuries as the author of those famous masterpieces of imaginative and melodious poetry, "The Raven," "The Haunted Palace," "The Bells," "Annabel Lee," "Israfel," and "Lenore."

# DEATH OF EDGAR A. POE.

BY N. P. WILLIS.

The ancient fable of two antagonistic spirits imprisoned in one body equally powerful and having the complete mastery by turns—of one man that is to say, inhabited by both a devil and an angel—seems to have been realized, if all we hear is true, in the character of the extraordinary man whose name we have written above. Our own impression of the nature of Edgar A. Poe differs in some important degree, however, from that which has been generally conveyed in the notices of his death. Let us, before telling what we personally know of him, copy a graphic and highly finished portraiture, from the pen of Dr. Rufus W. Griswold, which appeared in a recent number of the *Tribune*:—

"Edgar Allan Poe is dead. He died in Baltimore on Sunday, October 7th. This announcement will startle many, but few will be grieved by it. The poet was known, personally or by reputation, in all this country; he had readers in England, and in several of the

states of Continental Europe; but he had few or no friends; and the regrets for his death will be suggested principally by the consideration that in him literary art has lost one of its most brilliant but erratic stars." * * *

"His conversation was at times almost super-mortal in its eloquence. His voice was modulated with astonishing skill, and his large and variably expressive eyes looked repose or shot fiery tumult into theirs who listened, while his own face glowed, or was changeless in pallor, as his imagination quickened his blood or drew it back frozen to his heart. His imagery was from the worlds which no mortals can see but with the vision of genius.—Suddenly starting from a proposition, exactly and sharply defined, in terms of utmost simplicity and clearness, he rejected the forms of customary logic, and by a crystalline process of accretion, built up his ocular demonstrations in forms of gloomiest and ghastliest grandeur, or in those of the most airy and delicious beauty—so minutely and distinctly, yet so rapidly, that the attention which was yielded to him was chained till it stood among his wonderful creations—till he himself dissolved the spell, and brought his hearers back to common and base existence, by vulgar fancies or exhibitions of the ignoblest passion.

"He was at all times a dreamer—dwelling in ideal realms—in heaven or hell—peopled with the creatures and the accidents of his brain. He walked the streets, in madness or melancholy, with lips moving in indistinct curses, or with eyes upturned in passionate prayer (never for himself, for he felt, or professed to feel, that he was already damned, but) for their happiness who at the moment were objects of his idolatry;—or, with his glances introverted to a heart gnawed with anguish, and with a face shrouded in gloom, he would brave the wildest storms; and all night, with drenched garments and arms beating the winds and rains, would speak as if to spirits that at such times only could be evoked by him from the Aidenn, close by whose portals his disturbed soul sought to forget the ills to which his constitution subjected him—close by the Aidenn where were those he loved—the Aidenn which he might never see,

but in fitful glimpses, as its gates opened to receive the less fiery and more happy natures whose destiny to sin did not involve the doom of death.

"He seemed, except when some fitful pursuit subjugated his will and engrossed his faculties, always to bear the memory of some controlling sorrow. The remarkable poem of *The Raven* was probably much more nearly than has been supposed, even by those who were very intimate with him, a reflection and an echo of his own history. *He* was that bird's

"'—— unhappy master whom unmerciful Disaster
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore—
Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore
Of "Never—never more."'

"Every genuine author in a greater or less degree leaves in his works, whatever their design, traces of his personal character; elements of his immortal being, in which the individual survives the person. While we read the pages of the *Fall of the House of Usher* or of *Mesmeric Revelations*, we see in the solemn and stately gloom which invests one, and in the subtle metaphysical analysis of both, indications of the idiosyncrasies—of what was most remarkable and peculiar—in the author's intellectual nature. But we see here only the better phases of his nature, only the symbols of his juster action, for his harsh experience had deprived him of all faith, in man or woman. He had made up his mind upon the numberless complexities of the social world, and the whole system with him was an imposture. This conviction gave a direction to his shrewd and naturally unamiable character. Still, though he regarded society as composed altogether of villains, the sharpness of his intellect was not of that kind which enabled him to cope with villainy, while it continually caused him by overshots to fail of the success of honesty. He was in many respects like Francis Vivian in Bulwer's novel of 'The Caxtons.' Passion in him comprehended many of the worst emotions which militate against human happiness.

You could not contradict him, but you raised quick choler; you could not speak of wealth, but his cheek paled with gnawing envy. The astonishing natural advantages of this poor boy—his beauty, his readiness, the daring spirit that breathed around him like a fiery atmosphere—had raised his constitutional self-confidence into an arrogance that turned his very claims to admiration into prejudices against him. Irascible, envious—bad enough, but not the worst, for these salient angles were all varnished over with a cold, repellent cynicism, his passions vented themselves in sneers. There seemed to him no moral susceptibilty; and, what was more remarkable in a proud nature, little or nothing of the true point of honor. He had, to a morbid excess, that desire to rise which is vulgarly called ambition, but no wish for the esteem or the love of his species; only the hard wish to succeed—not shine, not serve—succeed that he might have the right to despise a world which galled his self-conceit.

"We have suggested the influence of his aims and vicissitudes upon his literature. It was more conspicuous in his later than in his earlier writings. Nearly all that he wrote in the last two or three years—including much of his best poetry—was in some sense biographical; in draperies of his imagination, those who had taken the trouble to trace his steps, could perceive, but slightly concealed, the figure of himself."

Apropos of the disparaging portion of the above well-written sketch, let us truthfully say :—

Some four or five years since, when editing a daily paper in this city, Mr. Poe was employed by us, for several months, as critic and sub-editor. This was our first personal acquaintance with him. He resided with his wife and mother at Fordham, a few miles out of town, but was at his desk in the office, from nine in the morning till the evening paper

went to press. With the highest admiration for his genius, and a willingness to let it atone for more than ordinary irregularity, we were led by common report to expect a very capricious attention to his duties, and occasionally a scene of violence and difficulty. Time went on, however, and he was invariably punctual and industrious. With his pale, beautiful, and intellectual face, as a reminder of what genius was in him, it was impossible, of course, not to treat him always with deferential courtesy, and, to our occasional request that he would not probe too deep in a criticism, or that he would erase a passage colored too highly with his resentments against society and mankind, he readily and courteously assented—far more yielding than most men, we thought, on points so excusably sensitive. With a prospect of taking the lead in another periodical, he at last voluntarily gave up his employment with us, and, through all this considerable period, we had seen but one presentment of the man—a quiet, patient, industrious, and most gentlemanly person, commanding the utmost respect and good feeling by his unvarying deportment and ability.

Residing as he did in the country, we never met Mr. Poe in hours of leisure; but he frequently called on us afterward at our place of business, and we met him often in the street—invariably the same sad-mannered, winning, and refined gentleman, such as we had always known him. It was by rumor only, up to the

day of his death, that we knew of any other development of manner or character. We heard, from one who knew him well (what should be stated in all mention of his lamentable irregularities), that, with a *single glass* of wine, his whole nature was reversed, the demon became uppermost, and, though none of the usual signs of intoxication were visible, his *will* was palpably insane. Possessing his reasoning faculties in excited activity, at such times, and seeking his acquaintances with his wonted look and memory, he easily seemed personating only another phase of his natural character, and was accused, accordingly, of insulting arrogance and bad-heartedness. In this reversed character, we repeat, it was never our chance to see him. We know it from hearsay, and we mention it in connection with this sad infirmity of physical constitution; which puts it upon very nearly the ground of a temporary and almost irresponsible insanity.

The arrogance, vanity, and depravity of heart, of which Mr. Poe was generally accused, seem to us referrable altogether to this reversed phase of his character. Under that degree of intoxication which only acted upon him by demonizing his sense of truth and right, he doubtless said and did much that was wholly irreconcilable with his better nature; but, when himself, and as we knew him only, his modesty and unaffected humility, as to his own deservings, were a constant charm to his character. His letters (of which the constant

application for autographs has taken from us, we are sorry to confess, the greater portion) exhibited this quality very strongly. In one of the carelessly written notes of which we chance still to retain possession, for instance, he speaks of "The Raven"—that extraordinary poem which electrified the world of imaginative readers, and has become the type of a school of poetry of its own—and, in evident earnest, attributes its success to the few words of commendation with which we had prefaced it in this paper. It will throw light on his same character to give a literal copy of the note:—

"FORDHAM, April 20, 1849.

"MY DEAR WILLIS:—The poem which I enclose, and which I am so vain as to hope you will like in some respects, has been just published in a paper for which sheer necessity compels me to write, now and then. It pays well as times go—but unquestionably it ought to pay ten prices; for whatever I send it I feel I am consigning to the tomb of the Capulets. The verses accompanying this, may I beg you to take out of the tomb, and bring them to light in the *Home Journal?* If you can oblige me so far as to copy them, I do not think it will be necessary to say 'From the ——, —that would be too bad;—and, perhaps, 'From a late —— paper,' would do.

"I have not forgotten how a 'good word in season' from you made 'The Raven,' and made 'Ulalume' (which, by the way, people have done me the honor of attributing to you)—therefore I *would* ask you (if I dared) to say something of these lines—if they please you.

"Truly yours ever,
"EDGAR A. POE."

In double proof—of his earnest disposition to do the best for himself, and as the trustful

and grateful nature which has been denied him—we give another of the only three of his notes which we chance to retain :—

"FORDHAM, January 22, 1848.

"MY DEAR MR. WILLIS:—I am about to make an effort at re-establishing myself in the literary world, and *feel* that I may depend upon your aid.

"My general aim is to start a Magazine, to be called '*The Stylus*;' but it would be useless to me, even when established, if not entirely out of the control of a publisher. I mean, therefore, to get up a Journal which shall be *my own*, at all points. With this end in view, I must get a list of, at least, five hundred subscribers to begin with:—nearly two hundred I have already. I propose, however, to go South and West, among my personal and literary friends—old college and West Point acquaintances—and see what I can do. In order to get the means of taking the first step, I propose to lecture at the Society Library on Thursday, the 3d of February—and, that there may be no cause of *squabbling*, my subject shall *not be literary* at all. I have chosen a broad text—'The Universe.'

"Having thus given you *the facts* of the case, I leave all the rest to the suggestions of your own tact and generosity. Gratefully—*most* gratefully—

"Your friend always,

"EDGAR A. POE."

Brief and chance-taken as these letters are, we think they sufficiently prove the existence of the very qualities denied to Mr. Poe—humility, willingness to persevere, belief in another's kindness, and capability of cordial and grateful friendship! Such he assuredly was *when sane*. Such only he has invariably seemed to us, in all we have happened personally to know of him, through a friendship of five or six years. And so much easier is it

to believe what we have seen and known, than what we *hear of* only, that we remember him but with admiration and respect—these descriptions of him, when morally insane, seeming to us like portraits, painted in sickness, of a man we have only known in health.

But there is another, more touching, and far more forcible evidence that there *was goodness* in Edgar A. Poe. To reveal it, we are obliged to venture upon the lifting of the veil which sacredly covers grief and refinement in poverty—but we think it may be excused, if so we can brighten the memory of the poet, even were there not a more needed and immediate service which it may render to the nearest link broken by his death.

Our first knowledge of Mr. Poe's removal to this city was by a call which we received from a lady who introduced herself to us as the mother of his wife. She was in search of employment for him, and she excused her errand by mentioning that he was ill, that her daughter was a confirmed invalid, and that their circumstances were such as compelled her taking it upon herself. The countenance of this lady, made beautiful and saintly with an evidently complete giving up of her life to privation and sorrowful tenderness, her gentle and mournful voice urging its plea, her long-forgotten but habitually and unconsciously refined manners, and her appealing and yet appreciative mention of the claims and abilities of her son, disclosed at once the pres-

ence of one of those angels upon earth that women in adversity can be. It was a hard fate that she was watching over. Mr. Poe wrote with fastidious difficulty, and in a style too much above the popular level to be well paid. He was always in pecuniary difficulty, with his sick wife, frequently in want of the merest necessaries of life. Winter after winter, for years, the most touching sight to us, in this whole city, has been that tireless minister to genius, thinly and insufficiently clad, going from office to office with a poem, or an article on some literary subject, to sell—sometimes simply pleading in a broken voice that he was ill, and begging for him—mentioning nothing but that "he was ill," whatever might be the reason for his writing nothing—and never, amid all her tears and recitals of distress, suffering one syllable to escape her lips that could convey a doubt of him, or a complaint, or a lessening of pride in his genius and good intentions. Her daughter died, a year and a half since, but she did not desert him. She continued his ministering angel—living with him—caring for him—guarding him against exposure, and, when he was carried away by temptation, amid grief and the loneliness of feelings unreplied to, and awoke from his self-abandonment prostrated in destitution and suffering, *begging* for him still. If woman's devotion born with a first love, and fed with human passion, hallow its object, as it is allowed to do, what does not a devotion like this pure,

disinterested, and holy as the watch of an invisible spirit—say for him who inspired it.

We have a letter before us, written by this lady, Mrs. Clemm, on the morning in which she heard of the death of this object of her untiring care. It is merely a request that we would call upon her, but we will copy a few of its words—sacred as its privacy is—to warrant the truth of the picture we have drawn above, and add force to the appeal we wish to make for her:

"I have this morning heard of the death of my darling Eddie. . . . . Can you give me any circumstances or particulars ? . . . . Oh! do not desert your poor friend in this bitter affliction. . . . . Ask Mr. —— to come, as I must deliver a message to him from my poor Eddie. . . . . I need not ask you to notice his death and to speak well of him. I know you will. But say what an affectionate son he was to me, his poor desolate mother." . . . . .

To hedge round a grave with respect, what choice is there, between the relinquished wealth and honors of the world, and the story of such a woman's unrewarded devotion? Risking what we do, in delicacy, by making it public, we feel—other reasons aside—that it betters the world to make known that there are such ministrations to its erring and gifted. What we have said will speak to some hearts. There are those who will be glad to know how the lamp, whose light of poverty has beamed on their far-away recognition, was watched over with care and pain—that they may send to her, who is more darkened than they by its

extinction, some token of their sympathy. She is destitute, and alone. If any, far or near, will send to us what may aid and cheer her through the remainder of her life, we will joyfully place it in her hands.

The reason why so many memoirs of Poe have been written is to be found in the inaccuracy and malignity of Griswold's famous life. This was at once attacked by Graham and Neale, and the controversy thus started has raged ever since. Many obscure points have been thereby cleared up, such as the date and place of the poet's birth, the real manner of his death, the exact nature of his relations with Mrs. Whitman, etc. Griswold has been convicted of many errors of fact; and yet, in spite of the generous women who have rushed to Poe's defense, and of the laborious biography of his latest rehabilitator, Mr. Ingram, the essential features of his character remain much as Griswold left them.

It can hardly be denied that Poe was personally a very poor creature. He was thankless, vain, quarrelsome, and insincere. He had some fine, winning traits which made a few women love him, but he was one whom no man could trust or respect.

# THE POETIC PRINCIPLE.

In speaking of the Poetic Principle, I have no design to be either thorough or profound. While discussing, very much at random, the essentiality of what we call Poetry, my principal purpose will be to cite, for consideration, some few of those minor English or American poems which best suit my own taste, or which upon my own fancy have left the most definite impressions. By "minor poems" I mean, of course, poems of little length. And here, in the beginning, permit me to say a few words in regard to a somewhat peculiar principle, which, whether rightfully or wrongfully, has always had its influence in my own critical estimate of the poem. I hold that a long poem does not exist. I maintain that the phrase, "a long poem," is simply a flat contradiction in terms.

I need scarcely observe that a poem deserves its title only inasmuch as it excites, by elevating the soul. The value of the poem is in the ratio of this elevating excitement. But all excitements are, through a psychical necessity, transient. That degree of excitement which

would entitle a poem to be so called at all, cannot be sustained throughout a composition of any great length. After the lapse of half an hour, at the very utmost, it flags—fails—a revulsion ensues—and then the poem is in effect, and in fact, no longer such.

There are, no doubt, many who have found difficulty in reconciling the critical dictum that the "Paradise Lost" is to be devoutly admired throughout, with the absolute impossibility of maintaining for it, during perusal, the amount of enthusiasm which that critical dictum would demand. This great work, in fact, is to be regarded as poetical only when, losing sight of that vital requisite in all works of Art, Unity, we view it merely as a series of minor poems. If, to preserve its Unity—its totality of effect of impression,—we read it (as would be necessary) at a single sitting, the result is but a constant alternation of excitement and depression. After a passage of what we feel to be true poetry, there follows, inevitably, a passage of platitude which no critical prejudgment can force us to admire; but if, upon completing the work, we read it again, omitting the first book—that is to say, commencing with the second—we shall be surprised at now finding that admirable which we before condemned—that damnable which we had previously so much admired. It follows from all this that the ultimate, aggregate, or absolute effect of even the best epic under the sun is a nullity:—and this is precisely the fact.

In regard to the "Iliad," we have, if not positive proof, at least very good reason, for believing it intended as a series of lyrics; but, granting the epic intention, I can say only that the work is based on an imperfect sense of Art. The modern epic is, of the supposititious ancient model, but an inconsiderate and blindfold imitation. But the day of these artistic anomalies is over. If, at any time, any very long poem *were* popular in reality—which I doubt—it is at least clear that no very long poem will ever be popular again.

That the extent of a poetical work is, *ceteris paribus*, the measure of its merit, seems undoubtedly, when we thus state it, a proposition sufficiently absurd—yet we are indebted for it to the quarterly Reviews. Surely there can be nothing in mere *size*, abstractly considered—there can be nothing in mere *bulk*, so far as a volume is concerned, which has so continuously elicited admiration from these saturnine pamphlets! A mountain, to be sure, by the mere sentiment of physical magnitude which it conveys, *does* impress us with a sense of the sublime—but no man is impressed after *this* fashion by the material grandeur of even "The Columbiad." Even the Quarterlies have not instructed us to be so impressed by it. As *yet*, they have not *insisted* on our estimating Lamartine by the cubic foot, or Pollock by the pound—but what else are we to *infer* from their continual prating about "sustained effort"? If, by "sustained effort," any little

gentleman has accomplished an epic, let us frankly commend him for the effort—if this indeed be a thing commendable—but let us forbear praising the epic on the effort's account. It is to be hoped that common sense, in the time to come, will prefer deciding upon a work of Art, rather by the impression it makes—by the effect it produces—than by the time it took to impress the effect, or by the amount of "sustained effort" which had been found necessary in effecting the impression. The effort is, that perseverance is one thing and genius quite another—nor can all the Quarterlies in Christendom confound them. By and by, this proposition, with many which I have been just urging, will be received as self-evident. In the mean time, by being generally condemned as falsities, they will not be essentially damaged as truths.

On the other hand, it is clear that a poem may be improperly brief. Undue brevity degenerates into mere epigrammatism. A *very* short poem, while now and then producing a brilliant or vivid, never produces a profound or enduring effect. There must be the steady pressing down of the stamp upon the wax. De Beranger has wrought innumerable things, pungent and spirit-stirring; but, in general, they have been too imponderous to stamp themselves deeply into the public attention; and thus, as so many feathers of fancy, have been blown aloft only to be whistled down the wind.

A remarkable instance of the effect of undue brevity in depressing a poem—in keeping it out of the popular view—is afforded by the following exquisite little Serenade:

I arise from dreams of thee
In the first sweet sleep of night,
When the winds are breathing low,
And the stars are shining bright.
I arise from dreams of thee,
And a spirit in my feet
Has led me—who knows how?—
To thy chamber-window, sweet!

The wandering airs they faint
On the dark, the silent stream—
The champak odors fall
Like sweet thoughts in a dream;
The nightingale's complaint,
It dies upon her heart,
As I must die on thine,
O, beloved as thou art!

O, lift me from the grass!
I die, I faint, I fail!
Let thy love in kisses rain
On my lips and eyelids pale.
My cheek is cold and white, alas!
My heart beats loud and fast:
Oh! press it close to thine again,
Where it will break at last!

Very few, perhaps, are familar with these lines—yet no less a poet than Shelley is their author. Their warm, yet delicate and ethereal imagination will be appreciated by all—but by none so thoroughly as by him who has himself arisen from sweet dreams of one beloved, to bathe in the aromatic air of a southern midsummer night.

One of the finest poems by Willis—the very best, in my opinion, which he has ever written—has, no doubt, through this same defect of undue brevity, been kept back from its proper position, not less in the critical than in the popular view.

The shadows lay along Broadway,
'Twas near the twilight-tide—
And slowly there a lady fair
Was walking in her pride.
Alone walk'd she; but, viewlessly,
Walk'd spirits at her side.

Peace-charm'd the street beneath her feet,
And Honor charm'd the air;
And all astir looked kind on her,
And call'd her good as fair—
For all God ever gave to her
She kept with chary care.

She kept with care her beauties rare
From lovers warm and true—
For her heart was cold to all but gold,
And the rich came not to woo—
But honor'd well are charms to sell
If priests the selling do.

Now walking there was one more fair—
A slight girl, lily-pale;
And she had unseen company
To make the spirit quail—
'Twixt Want and Scorn she walked forlorn,
And nothing could avail.

No mercy now can clear her brow
For this world's peace to pray;
For, as love's wild prayer dissolved in air,
Her woman's heart gave way!—
But the sin forgiven by Christ in Heaven
By man is cursed alway!

In this composition we find it difficult to recognize the Willis who has written so many mere "verses of society." The lines are not only richly ideal, but full of energy; while they breathe an earnestness—an evident sincerity of sentiment—for which we look in vain throughout all the other works of this author.

While the epic mania—while the idea that, to merit in poetry, prolixity is indispensable—has, for some years past, been gradually dying out of the public mind, by mere dint of its own absurdity—we find it succeeded by a heresy too palpably false to be long tolerated, but one which, in the brief period it has already endured, may be said to have accomplished more in the corruption of our Poetical Literature than all its other enemies combined. I allude to the heresy of *The Didactic*. It has been assumed, tacitly and avowedly, directly and indirectly, that the ultimate object of all Poetry is Truth. Every poem, it is said, should inculcate a moral; and by this moral is the poetical merit of the work to be adjudged. We Americans especially have patronized this happy idea; and we Bostonians, very especially, have developed it in full. We have taken it into our heads that to write a poem simply for the poem's sake, and to acknowledge such to have been our design, would be to confess ourselves radically wanting in the true Poetic dignity and force:—but the simple fact is, that, would we but permit ourselves to look into our own souls, we should immediately there discover

that under the sun there neither exists nor *can* exist any work more thoroughly dignified—more supremely noble than this very poem *per se*—this poem which is a poem and nothing more—this poem written solely for the poem's sake.

With as deep a reverence for the True as ever inspired the bosom of man, I would, nevertheless, limit, in some measure, its modes of inculcation. I would limit to enforce them. I would not enfeeble them by dissipation. The demands of Truth are severe. She has no sympathy with the myrtles. All *that* which is so indispensable in Song, is precisely all *that* with which *she* has nothing whatever to do. It is but making her a flaunting paradox, to wreathe her in gems and flowers. In enforcing a truth, we need severity rather than efflorescence of language. We must be simple, precise, terse. We must be cool, calm, unimpassioned. In a word, we must be in that mood which, as nearly as possible, is the exact converse of the poetical. *He* must be blind indeed who does not perceive the radical and chasmal differences between the truthful and the poetical modes of inculcation. He must be theory-mad beyond redemption who, in spite of these differences, shall still persist in attempting to reconcile the obstinate oils and waters of Poetry and Truth.

Dividing the world of mind into its three most immediately obvious distinctions, we have the Pure Intellect, Taste, and the Moral

Sense. I place Taste in the middle, because it is just this position which, in the mind, it occupies. It holds intimate relations with either extreme, but from the Moral Sense is separated by so faint a difference that Aristotle has not hesitated to place some of its operations among the virtues themselves. Nevertheless, we find the *offices* of the trio marked with a sufficient distinction. Just as the Intellect concerns itself with Truth, so Taste informs us of the Beautiful while the Moral Sense is regardful of Duty. Of this latter, while Conscience teaches the obligation, and Reason the expediency, Taste contents herself with displaying the charms:—waging war upon Vice solely on the ground of her deformity—her disproportion—her animosity to the fitting, to the appropriate, to the harmonious—in a word, to Beauty.

An immortal instinct, deep within the spirit of man, is thus, plainly, a sense of the Beautiful. This it is which administers to his delight in the manifold forms, and sounds, and odors, and sentiments, amid which he exists. And just as the lily is repeated in the lake, or the eyes of Amaryllis in the mirror, so is the mere oral or written repetition of these forms, and sounds, and colors, and odors, and sentiments, a duplicate source of delight. But this mere repetition is not poetry. He who shall simply sing, with however glowing enthusiasm, or with however vivid a truth of description, of the sights, and sounds, and odors, and

colors, and sentiments, which greet *him* in common with all mankind—he, I say, has yet failed to prove his divine title. There is still a something in the distance which he has been unable to attain. We have still a thirst unquenchable, to allay which he has not shown us the crystal springs. This thirst belongs to the immortality of Man. It is at once a consequence and an indication of his perennial existence. It is the desire of the moth for the star. It is no mere appreciation of the Beauty before us—but a wild effort to reach the Beauty above. Inspired by an ecstatic prescience of the glories beyond the grave, we struggle, by multiform combinations among the things and thoughts of Time, to attain a portion of that Loveliness whose very elements, perhaps, appertain to eternity alone. And thus when by Poetry—or when by Music, the most entrancing of the Poetic moods—we find ourselves melted into tears—we weep then—not as the Abbate Gravina supposes—through excess of pleasure, but through a certain petulant, impatient sorrow at our inability to grasp *now* wholly, here on earth, at once and forever, those divine and rapturous joys, of which *through* the poem, or *through* the music, we attain to but brief and indeterminate glimpses.

The struggle to apprehend the supernal Loveliness—this struggle, on the part of souls fittingly constituted—has given to the world all *that* which it (the world) has ever been enabled at once to understand and *to feel* as poetic.

The Poetic Sentiment, of course, may develop itself in various modes—in Painting, in Sculpture, in Architecture, in the Dance—very especially in Music—and very peculiarly, and with a wide field, in the composition of the Landscape Garden. Our present theme, however, has regard only to its manifestation in words. And here let me speak briefly on the topic of rhythm. Contenting myself with the certainty that music, in its various modes of meter, rhythm, and rhyme, is of so vast a moment in Poetry as never to be wisely rejected—is so vitally important an adjunct, that he is simply silly who declines its assistance, I will not now pause to maintain its absolute essentiality. It is in Music, perhaps, that the soul most nearly attains the great end for which, when inspired by the Poetic Sentiment, it struggles—the creation of supernal Beauty. It *may* be, indeed, that here this sublime end is, now and then, attained *in fact*. We are often made to feel, with a shivering delight, that from an earthly harp are stricken notes which *cannot* have been unfamiliar to the angels. And thus there can be little doubt that in the union of Poetry with Music in its popular sense, we shall find the widest field for the Poetic development. The old Bards and Minnesingers had advantages which we do not possess—and Thomas Moore, singing his own songs, was, in the most legitimate manner, perfecting them as poems.

To recapitulate, then:—I would define, in

brief, the Poetry of words as *The Rhythmical Creation of Beauty*. Its sole arbiter is Taste. With the Intellect or with the Conscience, it has only collateral relations. Unless incidentally, it has no concern whatever either with Duty or with Truth.

A few words, however, in explanation. *That* pleasure which is at once the most pure, the most elevating, and the most intense, is derived, I maintain, from the contemplation of the Beautiful. In the contemplation of Beauty we alone find it possible to attain that pleasurable elevation, or excitement, *of the soul*, which we recognize as the Poetic Sentiment, and which is so easily distinguished from Truth, which is the satisfaction of the Reason, or from Passion, which is the excitement of the heart. I make Beauty, therefore—using the word as inclusive of the sublime—I make Beauty the province of the poem, simply because it is an obvious rule of Art that effects should be made to spring as directly as possible from their causes:—no one as yet having been weak enough to deny that the peculiar elevation in question is at least *most readily* attainable in the poem. It by no means follows, however, that the incitements of Passion, or the precepts of Duty, or even the lessons of Truth, may not be introduced into a poem, and with advantage; for they may subserve, incidentally, in various ways, the general purposes of the work:—but the true artist will always contrive to tone them down in proper subjec-

tion to that *Beauty* which is the atmosphere and the real essence of the poem.

I cannot better introduce the few poems which I shall present for your consideration, than by the citation of the Pröem to Mr. Longfellow's "Waif":

The day is done, and the darkness
  Falls from the wings of Night,
As a feather is wafted downward
  From an Eagle in his flight.

I see the lights of the village
  Gleam through the rain and the mist,
And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me
  That my soul cannot resist;

A feeling of sadness and longing,
  That is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
  As the mist resembles the rain.

Come, read to me some poem,
  Some simple and heartfelt lay,
That shall soothe this restless feeling
  And banish the thoughts of day.

Not from the grand old masters,
  Not from the bards sublime,
Whose distant footsteps echo
  Through the corridors of time.

For, like strains of martial music,
  Their mighty thoughts suggest
Life's endless toil and endeavor;
  And to-night I long for rest.

Read from some humbler poet,
  Whose songs gushed from his heart,
As showers from the clouds of summer,
  Or tears from the eyelids start;

Who through long days of labor,
And nights devoid of ease,
Still heard in his soul the music
Of wonderful melodies.

Such songs have power to quiet
The restless pulse of care,
And come like the benediction
That follows after prayer.

Then read from the treasured volume
The poem of thy choice,
And lend to the rhyme of the poet
The beauty of thy voice.

And the night shall be filled with music,
And the cares, that infest the day,
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away.

With no great range of imagination, these lines have been admired for their delicacy of expression. Some of the images are very effective. Nothing can be better than—

————The bards sublime,
Whose distant footsteps echo
Down the corridors of Time.

The idea of the last quatrain is also very effective. The poem, on the whole, however, is chiefly to be admired for the graceful *insouciance* of its meter, so well in accordance with the character of the sentiments, and especially for the *ease* of the general manner. This "ease," or naturalness, in a literary style, it has long been the fashion to regard as ease in appearance alone—as a point of really difficult attainment. But not so: a natural manner is

difficult only to him who should never meddle with it—to the unnatural. It is but the result of writing with the understanding, or with the instinct, that *the tone*, in composition, should always be that which the mass of mankind would adopt—and must perpetually vary, of course, with the occasion. The author, who, after the fashion of *The North American Review*, should be, upon *all* occasions, merely "quiet," must necessarily upon *many* occasions be simply silly, or stupid; and has no more right to be considered "easy," or "natural" than a Cockney exquisite, or than the sleeping Beauty in the wax-works.

Among the minor poems of Bryant, none has so much impressed me as the one which he entitles "June." I quote only a portion of it:

There, through the long, long summer hours,
The golden light should lie,
And thick, young herbs and groups of flowers
Stand in their beauty by.
The oriole should build and tell
His love-tale, close beside my cell;
The idle butterfly
Should rest him there, and there be heard
The housewife-bee and humming-bird.

And what, if cheerful shouts, at noon,
Come, from the village sent,
Or songs of maids, beneath the moon,
With fairy laughter blent?
And what if, in the evening light,
Betrothed lovers walk in sight
Of my low monument?
I would the lovely scene around
Might know no sadder sight nor sound.

I know, I know I should not see
The season's glorious show,
Nor would its brightness shine for me,
Nor its wild music flow;
But if, around my place of sleep,
The friends I love should come to weep,
They might not haste to go.
Soft airs, and song, and light, and bloom
Should keep them lingering by my tomb.

These to their soften'd hearts should bear
The thought of what has been,
And speak of one who cannot share
The gladness of the scene;
Whose part in all the pomp that fills
The circuit of the summer hills,
Is—that his grave is green;
And deeply would their hearts rejoice
To hear again his living voice.

The rhythmical flow, here, is even voluptuous—nothing could be more melodious. The poem has always affected me in a remarkable manner. The intense melancholy which seems to well up, perforce, to the surface of all the poet's cheerful sayings about his grave, we find thrilling us to the soul—while there is the truest poetic elevation in the thrill. The impression left is one of a pleasurable sadness. And if, in the remaining compositions which I shall introduce to you, there be more or less of a similar tone always apparent, let me remind you that (how or why we know not) this certain taint of sadness is inseparably connected with all the higher manifestations of true Beauty. It is, nevertheless,

A feeling of sadness and longing
That is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
As the mist resembles the rain.

The taint of which I speak is clearly perceptible even in a poem so full of brilliancy and spirit as the "Health" of Edward Coat Pinkney:

I fill this cup to one made up
Of loveliness alone,
A woman, of her gentle sex
The seeming paragon;
To whom the better elements
And kindly stars have given
A form so fair, that, like the air,
'Tis less of earth than heaven.

Her every tone is music's own,
Like those of morning birds,
And something more than melody
Dwells ever in her words;
The coinage of her heart are they,
And from her lips each flows
As one may see the burden'd bee
Forth issue from the rose.

Affections are as thoughts to her,
The measures of her hours;
Her feelings have the fragrancy,
The freshness of young flowers;
And lovely passions, changing oft,
So fill her, she appears
The image of themselves by turns,—
The idol of past years!

Of her bright face one glance will trace
A picture on the brain,
And of her voice in echoing hearts
A sound must long remain;

But memory, such as mine of her,
So very much endears,
When death is nigh my latest sigh
Will not be life's, but hers.

I fill'd this cup to one made up
Of loveliness alone,
A woman, of her gentle sex
The seeming paragon—
Her health! and would on earth there stood
Some more of such a frame,
That life might be all poetry,
And weariness a name.

It was the misfortune of Mr. Pinkney to have been born too far south. Had he been a New Englander, it is probable that he would have been ranked as the first of American lyrists, by that magnanimous cable which has so long controled the destinies of American Letters, in conducting the thing called *The North American Review*. The poem just cited is especially beautiful; but the poetic elevation which it induces, we must refer chiefly to our sympathy in the poet's enthusiasm. We pardon his hyperboles for the evident earnestness with which they are uttered.

It was by no means my design, however, to expatiate upon the *merits* of what I should read you. These will necessarily speak for themselves. Boccalini, in his "Advertisements from Parnassus," tells us that Zoilus once presented Apollo a very caustic criticism upon a very admirable book:—whereupon the god asked him for the beauties of the work.

He replied that he only busied himself about the errors. On hearing this, Apollo, handing him a sack of unwinnowed wheat, bade him to pick out *all the chaff* for his reward.

Now this fable answers very well as a hit at the critics—but I am by no means sure that the god was in the right. I am by no means certain that the true limits of the critical duty are not grossly misunderstood. Excellence, in a poem especially, may be considered in the light of an axiom, which need only be properly *put*, to become self-evident. It is *not* excellence if it require to be demonstrated as such: —and thus, to point out too particularly the merits of a work of Art, is to admit that they are *not* merits altogether.

Among the "Melodies" of Thomas Moore, is one whose distinguished character as a poem proper, seems to have been singularly left out of view. I allude to his lines beginning—"Come, rest in this bosom." The intense energy of their expression is not surpassed by anything in Byron. There are two of the lines in which a sentiment is conveyed that embodies the *all in all* of the divine passion of Love—a sentiment which, perhaps has found its echo in more, and in more passionate, human hearts than any other single sentiment ever embodied in words:

Come, rest in this bosom, my own stricken deer,
Though the herd have fled from thee, thy home is still here:
Here still is the smile, that no cloud can o'ercast,
And a heart and a hand all thy own to the last.

Oh! what was love made for, if 't is not the same
Through joy and through torment, through glory and
shame?
I know not, I ask not, if guilt 's in that heart,
I but know that I love thee, whatever thou art.

Thou hast call'd me thy Angel in moments of bliss,
And thy Angel I'll be, 'mid the horrors of this,—
Through the furnace, unshrinking, thy steps to pursue,
And shield thee, and save thee,—or perish there too!

It has been the fashion, of late days, to deny Moore Imagination, while granting him Fancy —a distinction originating with Coleridge— than whom no man more fully comprehended the great powers of Moore. The fact is, that the fancy of this poet so far predominates over all his other faculties, and over the fancy of all other men, as to have induced, very naturally, the idea that he is fanciful *only*. But never was there a greater mistake. Never was a grosser wrong done the fame of a true poet. In the compass of the English language I can call to mind no poem more profoundly—more weirdly *imaginative* in the best sense, than the lines commencing—"I would I were by that dim lake"—which are the composition of Thomas Moore. I regret that I am unable to remember them.

One of the noblest—and, speaking of Fancy, one of the most singularly fanciful of modern poets, was Thomas Hood. His "Fair Ines" had always, for me, an inexpressible charm:

O saw ye not fair Ines?
She's gone into the West,

To dazzle when the sun is down,
  And rob the world of rest;
She took our daylight with her,
  The smiles that we love best,
With morning blushes on her cheek,
  And pearls upon her breast.

O turn again, fair Ines,
  Before the fall of night,
For fear the moon should shine alone,
  And stars unrival'd bright;
And blessed will the lover be
  That walks beneath their light,
And breathes the love against thy cheek
  I dare not even write!

Would I had been, fair Ines,
  That gallant cavalier,
Who rode so gayly by thy side,
  And whisper'd thee so near!
Were there no bonny dames at home,
  Or no true lovers here,
That he should cross the seas to win
  The dearest of the dear?

I saw thee, lovely Ines,
  Descend along the shore,
With bands of noble gentlemen,
  And banners wav'd before;
And gentle youth and maidens gay,
  And snowy plumes they wore;
It would have been a beauteous dream,
  —If it had been no more!

Alas, alas, fair Ines,
  She went away with song,
With Music waiting on her steps,
  And shoutings of the throng;
But some were sad and felt no mirth,
  But only Music's wrong,
In sounds that sang Farewell, Farewell,
  To her you've loved so long.

Farewell, farewell, fair Ines,
That vessel never bore
So fair a lady on its deck,
Nor danced so light before,—
Alas for pleasure on the sea,
And sorrow on the shore!
The smile that blessed one lover's heart
Has broken many more.

"The Haunted House," by the same author, is one of the truest poems ever written—one of the *truest*—one of the most unexceptionable—one of the most thoroughly artistic, both in its theme and in its execution. It is, moreover, powerfully ideal—imaginative. I regret that its length renders it unsuitable for the purposes of this Lecture. In place of it, permit me to offer the universally appreciated "Bridge of Sighs."

One more Unfortunate
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death!

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;——
Fashion'd so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!

Look at her garments
Clinging like cerements;
Whilst the wave constantly
Drips from her clothing;
Take her up instantly,
Loving and loathing;—

Touch her not scornfully,
Think of her mournfully,
Gently and humanly;
Not of the stains of her,
All that remains of her
Now, is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny
Rash and undutiful;
Past all dishonor,
Death has left on her
Only the beautiful.

Still, for all slips of hers,
One of Eve's family—
Wipe those poor lips of hers,
Oozing so clammily,
Loop up her tresses
Escaped from the comb,
Her fair auburn tresses;

Whilst wonderment guesses
Where was her home.

Who was her father ?
Who was her mother ?
Had she a sister ?
Had she a brother ?
Or was there a dearer one
Still, and a nearer one
Yet, than all other ?

Alas! for the rarity
Of Christian Charity
Under the sun!
Oh! it was pitiful!
Near a whole city full,
Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly
Feelings had changed :
Love, by harsh evidence
Thrown from its eminence,
Even God's providence
Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,
With many a light
From window and casement,
From garret to basement,
She stood, with amazement
Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March
Made her tremble and shiver
But not the black arch,
Or the dark flowing river:
Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery,
Swift to be hurl'd—
Anywhere, anywhere
Out of the world!

In she plunged boldly,
No matter how coldly
The rough river ran,—
Over the brink of it,
Picture it,—think of it,
Dissolute Man!
Lave in it, drink of it
Then, if you can!

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;
Fashion'd so slenderly,
Young and so fair!

Ere her limbs frigidly
Stiffen so rigidly,
Decently,—kindly,—
Smooth and compose them;
And her eyes, close them,
Staring so blindly!

Dreadfully staring
Through muddy impurity,
As when with the daring
Last look of despairing
Fixed on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,
Spurred by contumely,
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity,
Into her rest,—
Cross her hands humbly,
As if praying dumbly,
Over her breast!
Owning her weakness,
Her evil behavior,
And leaving, with meekness,
Her sins with her Saviour!

The vigor of this poem is no less remarkable than its pathos. The versification, although carrying the fanciful to the very verge of the fantastic, is nevertheless admirably adapted to the wild insanity which is the thesis of the poem.

Among the minor poems of Lord Byron, is one which has never received from the critics the praise which it undoubtedly deserves:

Though the day of my destiny's over,
And the star of my fate hath declined,
Thy soft heart refused to discover
The faults which so many could find;
Though thy soul with my grief was acquainted
It shrunk not to share it with me,
And the love which my spirit hath painted
It never hath found but in THEE.

Then when nature around me is smiling,
The last smile which answers to mine,
I do not believe it beguiling,
Because it reminds me of thine;
And when winds are at war with the ocean,
As the breasts I believed in with me,
If their billows excite an emotion,
It is that they bear me from THEE.

Though the rock of my last hope is shivered,
And its fragments are sunk in the wave,
Though I feel that my soul is delivered
To pain—it shall not be its slave.
There is many a pang to pursue me:
They may crush, but they shall not contemn—
They may torture, but shall not subdue me—
'Tis of THEE that I think—not of them.

Though human, thou didst not deceive me,
Though woman, thou didst not forsake,

Though loved, thou forborest to grieve me,
Though slandered, thou never couldst shake,—
Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,
Though parted, it was not to fly,
Though watchful, 't was not to defame me,
Nor mute, that the world might belie.

Yet I blame not the world, nor despise it,
Nor the war of the many with one—
If my soul was not fitted to prize it,
'T was folly not sooner to shun :
And if dearly that error hath cost me,
And more than I once could foresee,
I have found that whatever it lost me,
It could not deprive me of THEE.

From the wreck of the past, which hath perished,
Thus much I at least may recall,
It hath taught me that which I most cherished
Deserved to be dearest of all :
In the desert a fountain is springing,
In the wide waste there still is a tree,
And a bird in the solitude singing,
Which speaks to my spirit of THEE.

Although the rhythm, here, is one of the most difficult, the versification could scarcely be improved. No nobler *theme* ever engaged the pen of poet. It is the soul-elevating idea, that no man can consider himself entitled to complain of Fate while, in his adversity, he still retains the unwavering love of woman.

From Alfred Tennyson—although in perfect sincerity I regard him as the noblest poet that ever lived—I have left myself time to cite only a very brief specimen. I call him, and *think* him the noblest of poets—*not* because the impressions he produces are, at *all* times, the

most profound—*not* because the poetical excitement which he induces, is, at *all* times, the most intense—but because it *is*, at all times, the most ethereal—in other words, the most elevating and the most pure. No poet is so little of the earth, earthy. What I am about to read is from his last long poem, "The Princess:"

Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair,
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the underworld,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

Dear as remember'd kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd
On lips that are for others; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;
O Death in Life, the days that are no more.

Thus, although in a very cursory and imperfect manner, I have endeavored to convey to you my conception of the Poetic Principle. It has been my purpose to suggest that, while this Principle itself is, strictly and simply, the

Human Aspiration for Supernal Beauty, the manifestation of the Principle is always found in *an elevating excitement of the Soul*—quite independent of that passion which is the intoxication of the Heart—or of that Truth which is the satisfaction of the Reason. For, in regard to Passion, alas! its tendency is to degrade, rather than to elevate the Soul. Love, on the contrary—Love—the true, the divine Eros—the Uranian, as distinguished from the Dionæan Venus—is unquestionably the purest and truest of all poetical themes. Still in regard to Truth—if, to be sure, through the attainment of a truth, we are led to perceive a harmony where none was apparent before, we experience, at once, the true poetical effect—but this effect is referable to the harmony alone, and not in the least degree to the truth which merely served to render the harmony manifest.

We shall reach, however, more immediately a distinct conception of what the true Poetry is, by mere reference to a few of the simple elements which induce in the Poet himself the true poetical effect. He recognizes the ambrosia which nourishes his soul, in the bright orbs that shine in Heaven—in the volutes of the flower—in the clustering of low shrubberies—in the waving of the grain-fields—in the slanting of tall, Eastern trees—in the blue distance of mountains—in the grouping of clouds—in the twinkling of half-hidden brooks—in the gleaming of silver rivers—in the repose of sequestered lakes—in the star-mirror-

ing depths of lonely wells. He perceives it in the songs of birds—in the harp of Æolus—in the sighing of the night-wind—in the repining voice of the forest—in the surf that complains to the shore—in the fresh breath of the woods—in the scent of the violet—in the voluptuous perfume of the hyacinth—in the suggestive odor that comes to him at eventide, from far-distant, undiscovered islands, over dim oceans, illimitable and unexplored. He owns it in all noble thoughts—in all unworldly motives—in all holy impulses—in all chivalrous, generous, and self-sacrificing deeds. He feels it in the beauty of woman—in the grace of her step—in the luster of her eye—in the melody of her voice—in her soft laughter—in her sigh—in the harmony of the rustling of her robes. He deeply feels it in her winning endearments—in her burning enthusiasms—in her gentle charities—in her meek and devotional endurances—but above all—ah, far above all—he kneels to it—he worships it in the faith, in the purity, in the strength, in the altogether divine majesty of her *love*.

Let me conclude—by the recitation of yet another brief poem—one very different in character from any that I have before quoted. It is by Motherwell, and is called "The Song of the Cavalier." With our modern and altogether rational ideas of the absurdity and impiety of warfare, we are not precisely in that frame of mind best adapted to sympathize with the sentiments, and thus to appreciate the real

excellence of the poem. To do this fully, we must identify ourselves, in fancy, with the soul of the old cavalier.

Then mounte! then mounte! brave gallants, all,
And don your helmes amaine:
Deathe's couriers, Fame and Honor, call
Us to the field againe.
No shrewish teares shall fill our eye
When the sword-hilt's in our hand,—
Heart-whole we'll part, and no whit sighe
For the fayrest of the land;
Let piping swaine, and craven wight,
Thus weepe and puling crye,
Our business is like men to fight,
And hero-like to die!

Where was Edgar Poe born? I have been shown the house in Norfolk, Va., where he is supposed to have come into the world. Bostonians have assured me, with an awful emphasis, that his first worldly home was in their quaint town. As a matter of fact, Maryland, not Virginia or Massachusetts, can justly claim "the weird poet of the night" as her own.

In January, 1809, the Hopkins Theatrical Company, of which the poet's parents were members, was filling an engagement at the Holiday-street Theater, Baltimore, a famous playhouse, where the best talent of the nineteenth century performed, and which was the first theater in the United States to be lighted by gas. On the evening of the 19th of the month, Edgar Allan, the second child of David and Elizabeth Poe, was born in a boarding-house at No. 9 Front street, two doors from the old shot tower. The place was kept by a Mrs. Beers, who afterward asserted that she had to provide clothes for the little stranger. The place is now utilized as a German drinking saloon.

There is every proof of his Baltimore birth. The Baltimore Sun, in comment upon his death, says: "Mr. Poe, we believe, is a native of this city (Baltimore.") There seemed to be no question of it

during his lifetime; it was only when his fame was assured that other cities, awakening to a realization of his merits, demanded a share of the spoils. The world knows the history of his life until his tragic death. He was not so much a victim of drink as a victim of circumstances. Old friends and neighbors, mother-in-law teachers, boyhood and college mates, have refuted this fabrication. There is a legend in our family that stimulants in the lightest form would excite him and act almost instantly on his nerves. A cup of coffee has been known to have had the effect of liquor.

The circumstance of the drugging of Poe has ever been shrouded in mystery. No one could tell them but Poe himself and members of the Plug Uglies gang. They were members of a secret society, and their lips are therefore sealed.

The poet never regained consciousness long enough to relate the truth. The tales of besotted men have no value, for in all probability they were not thought of until after years had rendered any story plausible. Family traditions and records, however, have this authentic version of the finding of Poe on the night of October 3, 1849. My grandfather, the first cousin of the poet, was passing down Baltimore street on the night of the 3rd of October, when he saw lying under the steps of the Baltimore Museum, corner of Baltimore and Calvert streets, a man in what he thought was a drunken stupor.

It was election night, and his first thought was that it was some one overcome with indulgence of the day. Pity for the unfortunate caused him to bend over the man, when to his amazement he saw it was his cousin Edgar. Quickly sending a message to Neilson Poe, another cousin, who lived near, he took a carriage and, placing the still unconscious poet in it, took him to the Washington University Hospital, now the church home on North Broadway. For over three days the doctors worked to at least restore him to consciousness, but in vain. The case was diagnosed as drug poisoning, and exposure, combined with a weak heart, proved fatal.

On Sunday morning, October 7, as the angelus was ringing all over the city, his soul passed with the bells out into the surging sea of death. Followed to the end by his attending guardian, his last words have been reported, how accurately I cannot say: "Would to God some one would blow my damned brains out."

(miss Elizabeth Poe - 2nd Cousin
in special article to L.A. Times
Jan 17.'09.)

(see news-slip - p 276)
" " " " 278

What happened to him between Richmond and Baltimore never been ascertained. He seems to have arrived in Balti- re, Wednesday, October 3, 1849. An election was in progress, every available man was being forced to vote. It is supposed t Poe was captured by workers for the dominant party and oped" in a place of confinement with other men and there plied h drugged liquor. One glass would have been sufficient to make completely irresponsible. Whatever befell him, he was found the afternoon of October 3, unconscious in a polling place, by a ıter named Joseph W. Walker, who sent a note to the nearest tor. Poe's clothing had been taken from him and he wore a dirty garments. He had on neither vest nor neck cloth. His es were coarse and muddy. Moved to a Baltimore hospital, he ot recover consciousness until three the next morning, and only for a few moments. For three days he lay in a stupor, rspersed with fits of delirium. Occasionally he bemoaned his race. He could not tell what had befallen him, nor what had me of his clothes. He gradually grew weaker, after each oxysm, and on Sunday, October 7, about daybreak, he passed y. No friend was beside him to see his end, but his body claimed by Baltimore relatives. Gilbert Patten Brown 1/30/09

followed a moment later by
prayer, "Lord, have mercy on my poor soul."

But which are the books? What is the Raven? Who Lenore? Pallas we know, and Poe we are beginning to kn as facts replace fiction and calm history annihilates slande but book, bird and maiden—what, and who? Why the om ous fowl on helmed Pallas?

It is a personal experience allegorically expressed of that brilliant but unfortunate poet, Edgar Allan Poe. The characters are the raven, the demon of drink; Lenore, the ideal to which the poet aspired. Pallas was the goddess of wisdom and the fine arts. The choice of this goddess would, I think, indicate that the ideal of Poe's aspiration was intellectual rather than moral. Of course the demon of drink is destructive of the spiritual, moral, intellectual and physical, but there is nothing in the poem to indicate any feeling of solicitude for other than the intellectual. The forgotten lore was doubtless warnings read and received by word of mouth from friends and others, which warnings are hardly ever accepted until too late. The poet seems to have been indulging in a revery which quickly passes on to foreboding and then to hopeless despair. The relative position of the light, the Raven and the bust, by which the shadow was thrown upon the floor at the doorway of exit and entrance was used to represent the perpetual character of the raven's influence. The entrance of the raven by way of the window, not the door, indicates that he was not an invited guest, as no doubt he never is, but an intruder that subtly enters when not sufficiently guarded against.

A careful reading of this poem, possibly the most wonderful in our language, makes the heart bleed even when the exact import of the words is unknown.

This feature of Poe's writings is unique and is paralleled only by music which can play upon the imagination even though the words may not be understood.

O. H. Cooke.

# POEMS.

## PREFACE TO THE POEMS.

THESE trifles are collected and republished chiefly with a view to their redemption from the many improvements to which they have been subjected while going at random "the rounds of the press." I am naturally anxious that what I have written should circulate as I wrote it, if it circulate at all. In defense of my own taste, nevertheless, it is incumbent upon me to say that I think nothing in this volume of much value to the public, or very creditable to myself. Events not to be controlled have prevented me from making, at any time, any serious effort in what, under happier circumstances, would have been the field of my choice. With me poetry has been not a purpose, but a passion; and the passions should be held in reverence; they must not—they cannot at will be excited, with an eye to the paltry compensations, or the more paltry commendations, of mankind.

E. A. P.

And who was Lenore, in whose place the night bird comes whose saintly presence it usurps? Is she not the unattainable ideal of his better life, the lovely embodiment of the true nature within him that should have dominated his soul, filled his home, and yielded only sweet remembrances, as different from his repulsive and torturing memories as a radiant maiden is from a fetid bird of cancerous talons and carrion beak?

In his work and temperament Poe was first of all critic and judge, and the raven incarnated not only memory, but that terrible spirit of criticism by which Poe continually tortured his own soul and wounded friend and foe alike. Poe was scarcely known as a poet, certainly not widely reputed to be such prior to the publication of "The Raven" in 1845; but as a fertile, penetrating, subtile and merciless critic he was feared, hated and maligned. Literary pretenders regarded him very much as quiet people of to-day regard a dynamiter. His fierce onslaughts alienated even his friends; so that, though naturally social in disposition, he was doomed to solitude which, at times, threatened to become intolerable. For years he lived just above the suicide point of existence. It is slight wonder that to this sensitive soul, during the periods of "loneliness unbroken," came frequent temptations to indulgence in stimulants which, as he avers, were frantic "attemps to escape from torturing memories," and to relieve "a sense of insupportable loneliness."

See Atlantic monthly - Oct 1859, p. 522.

# POEMS.

"unique & most original of poems"
"masterpiece of genius."

## THE RAVEN. See Memoir, p. 48, 49.

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered
weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of for-
gotten lore—
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly
there came a tapping
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my
chamber door.
"'Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at
my chamber door—
Only this and nothing more."

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak
December,
And each separate dying ember wrought its
ghost upon the floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had
sought to borrow
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for
the lost Lenore—
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the
angels name Lenore—
Nameless here for evermore.

And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain
Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating
"'Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door—
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door;
This it is and nothing more."

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,
"Sir," said I, "or, Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,
That I scarce was sure I heard you"—here I opened wide the door——
Darkness there and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortals ever dared to dream before;
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, "Lenore!"—

This I whispered, and an echo murmured back
the word, "Lenore"
Merely this and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul
within me burning,
Soon again I heard a tapping something louder
than before.
"Surely," said I, "surely that is something at
my window lattice;
Let me see, then, what thereat is and this mys-
tery explore—
Let my heart be still a moment and this mys-
tery explore;—
'Tis the wind and nothing more."

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many
a flirt and flutter
In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly
days of yore.
Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute
stopped or stayed he,
But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above
my chamber door—
Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my
chamber door—
Perched, and sat and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy
into smiling,
By the grave and stern decorum of the counte-
nance it wore,

"Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou,"
I said, "art sure no craven,
Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering
from the Nightly shore—
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's
Plutonian shore!"
Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."

Much I marveled this ungainly fowl to hear
discourse so plainly,
Though its answer little meaning—little rele-
vancy bore;
For we cannot help agreeing that no living
human being
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above
his chamber door—
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above
his chamber door,
With such name as "Nevermore."

But the Raven, sitting lonely on that placid
bust, spoke only
That one word, as if his soul in that one word
he did outpour;
Nothing farther then he uttered; not a feather
then he fluttered—
Till I scarcely more than muttered "Other
friends have flown before—
On the morrow *he* will leave me, as my Hopes
have flown before."
Then the bird said "Nevermore."

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,
"Doubtless," said I, "what it utters is its only stock and store
Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful Disaster
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore—
Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore
Of 'Never—nevermore.'"

But the Raven still beguiling all my sad soul into smiling,
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird and bust and door;
Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore—
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore
Meant in croaking "Nevermore."

Thus I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom's core;
This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining
On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamplight gloated o'er,

But whose velvet violet lining with the lamp-
light gloating o'er
*She* shall press, ah, nevermore.

Then, methought, the air grew denser, per-
fumed from an unseen censer
Swung by Seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on
the tufted floor.
"Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee—
by these angels he hath sent thee
Respite—respite and nepenthe from thy mem-
ories of Lenore!
Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe and forget
this lost Lenore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil!—prophet
still, if bird or devil!—
Whether tempest sent, or whether tempest
tossed thee here ashore,
Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land
enchanted—
On this home by Horror haunted—tell me
truly, I implore—
Is there—*is* there balm in Gilead?—tell me—
tell me, I implore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil—prophet
still, if bird or devil!
By that Heaven that bends above us—by that
God we both adore—

Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the
distant Aidenn,
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore."
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!" I shrieked, upstarting—
"Get thee back into the tempest and the Night's Plutonian shore!
Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!
Leave my loneliness unbroken!—quit the bust above my door!
Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,
And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor,
Shall be lifted—nevermore.

## LENORE.

Ah, broken is the golden bowl! the spirit flown
forever!
Let the bell toll!—a saintly soul floats on the
Stygian river;
And, Guy De Vere, hast *thou* no tear?—weep
now or never more!
See! on yon drear and rigid bier low lies thy
love, Lenore!
Come! let the burial rite be read—the funeral
song be sung!—
An anthem for the queenliest dead that ever
died so young—
A dirge for her the doubly dead in that she
died so young.

"Wretches! ye loved her for her wealth and
hated her for her pride,
"And when she fell in feeble health, ye blessed
her—that she died!
"How *shall* the ritual, then, be read?—the
requiem how be sung?
"By you—by yours, the evil eye,—by yours,
the slanderous tongue
"That did to death the innocence that died,
and died so young?"

*Peccavimus ;* but rave not thus! and let a
Sabbath song
Go up to God so solemnly the dead may feel
no wrong!
The sweet Lenore hath "gone before," with
Hope, that flew beside,
Leaving thee wild for the dear child that should
have been thy bride—
For her, the fair and *debonair*, that now so
lowly lies,
The life upon her yellow hair but not within
her eyes—
The life still there, upon her hair—the death
upon her eyes.

"Avaunt! to-night my heart is light. No
dirge will I upraise,
"But waft the angel on her flight with a Pæan
of old days!
"Let *no* bell toll!—lest her sweet soul, amid
its hallowed mirth,
"Should catch the note, as it doth float up
from the damned Earth.
"To friends above, from fiends below, the in-
dignant ghost is riven—
"From Hell unto a high estate far up within
the Heaven—
"From grief and groan, to a golden throne,
beside the King of Heaven."

## HYMN.

At morn—at noon—at twilight dim—
Maria thou hast heard my hymn!
In joy and woe—in good and ill—
Mother of God, be with me still!
When the Hours flew brightly by,
And not a cloud obscured the sky,
My soul, lest it should truant be,
Thy grace did guide to thine and thee.
Now, when storms of Fate o'ercast
Darkly my Present and my Past,
Let my Future radiant shine
With sweet hopes of thee and thine!

## A VALENTINE.

For her this rhyme is penned, whose luminous eyes,
Brightly expressive as the twins of Lœda.
Shall find her own sweet name, that, nestling lies
Upon the page, enwrapped from every reader.
Search narrowly the lines!—they hold a treasure

Divine—a talisman—an amulet
That must be worn *at heart*. Search well the measure—
The words—the syllables! Do not forget
The trivialest point, or you may lose your labor!
And yet there is in this no Gordian knot
Which one might not undo without a saber,
If one could merely comprehend the plot.
Enwritten upon the leaf where now are peering
Eyes scintillating soul, there lie *perdus*
Three eloquent words oft uttered in the hearing
Of poets, by poets—as the name is a poet's, too.
Its letters, although naturally lying
Like the knight Pinto—Mendez Ferdinando—
Still form a synonym for Truth.—Cease trying!
You will not read the riddle, though you do the best you *can* do.

[To translate the address, read the first letter of the first line in connection with the second letter of the second line, the third letter of the third line, the fourth of the fourth, and so on to the end. The name will thus appear.]

## THE COLISEUM.

TYPE of the antique Rome! Rich reliquary
Of lofty contemplation left to Time
By buried centuries of pomp and power!
At length—at length—after so many days
Of weary pilgrimage and burning thirst,
(Thirst for the springs of lore that in thee lie,)
I kneel, an altered and an humble man,
Amid thy shadows, and so drink within
My very soul thy grandeur, gloom, and glory!

Vastness! and Age! and Memories of Eld!
Silence! and Desolation! and dim Night!
I feel ye now—I feel ye in your strength—
O spells more sure than e'er Judæan king
Taught in the gardens of Gethsemane!
O charms more potent than the rapt Chaldee
Ever drew down from out the quiet stars!

Here, where a hero fell, a column falls!
Here, where the mimic eagle glared in gold,
A midnight vigil holds the swarthy bat!
Here, where the dames of Rome their gilded hair
Waved to the wind, now wave the reed and thistle!

Here, where on golden throne the monarch lolled,
Glides, specter-like, unto his marble home,
Lit by the wan light of the horned moon,
The swift and silent lizard of the stones!

But stay! these walls—these ivy-clad arcades—
These moldering plinths—these sad and blackened shafts—
These vague entablatures—this crumbling frieze—
These shattered cornices—this wreck—this ruin—
These stones—alas! these gray stones—are they all—
All of the famed, and the colossal left
By the corrosive Hours to Fate and me?

"Not all"—the Echoes answer me—"not all!
"Prophetic sounds and loud, arise forever
"From us, and from all Ruin, unto the wise,
"As melody from Memnon to the Sun.
"We rule the hearts of mightiest men—we rule
"With a despotic sway all giant minds.
"We are not impotent—we pallid stones.
"Not all our power is gone—not all our fame—
"Not all the magic of our high renown—
"Not all the wonder that encircles us—
"Not all the mysteries that in us lie—

"Not all the memories that hang upon
"And cling around about us as a garment,
"Clothing us in a robe of more than glory."

## TO HELEN.

I saw thee once—once only—years ago:
I must not say *how* many—but *not* many.
It was a July midnight; and from out
A full-orbed moon, that, like thine own soul, soaring,
Sought a precipitate pathway up through heaven,
There fell a silvery-silken veil of light,
With quietude, and sultriness, and slumber,
Upon the upturn'd faces of a thousand
Roses that grew in an enchanted garden,
Where no winds dared to stir, unless on tip-toe—
Fell on the upturn'd faces of these roses
That gave out, in return for the love-light,
Their odorous souls in an ecstatic death—
Fell on the upturn'd faces of these roses
That smiled and died in this parterre, enchanted
By thee, and by the poetry of thy presence.
Clad all in white, upon a violet bank
I saw thee half reclining; while the moon
Fell on the upturn'd faces of the roses,
And on thine own, upturn'd—alas, in sorrow!

Was it not Fate, that, on this July midnight—
Was it not Fate, (whose name is also Sorrow,)
That bade me pause before that garden-gate,
To breathe the incense of those slumbering roses?
No footstep stirred: the hated world all slept,
Save only thee and me. (Oh, Heaven!—oh, God!
How my heart beats in coupling those two words!)
Save only thee and me. I paused—I looked—
And in an instant all things disappeared.
(Ah, bear in mind this garden was enchanted!)
The pearly luster of the moon went out:
The mossy banks and the meandering paths,
The happy flowers and the repining trees,
Were seen no more: the very roses' odors
Died in the arms of the adoring airs.
All—all expired save thee—save less than thou:
Save only the divine light in thine eyes—
Save but the soul in thine uplifted eyes.
I saw but them—they were the world to me.
I saw but them—saw only them for hours—
Saw only them until the moon went down.
What wild heart-histories seemed to lie enwritten
Upon those crystalline, celestial spheres!
How dark a woe! yet how sublime a hope!
How silently serene a sea of pride!

imaginative conception & in form it
may even be said to be one of a finality

How daring an ambition! yet how deep—
How fathomless a capacity for love!

But now, at length, dear Dian sank from sight,
Into a western couch of thunder-cloud;
And thou, a ghost, amid the entombing trees
Didst glide away. *Only thine eyes remained.*
They *would not* go—they never yet have gone.
Lighting my lonely pathway home that night,
*They* have not left me (as my hopes have) since
They follow me—they lead me through the years
They are my ministers—yet I their slave.
Their office is to illumine and enkindle—
My duty, *to be saved* by their bright light,
And purified in their electric fire,
And sanctified in their elysian fire.
They fill my soul with Beauty (which is Hope),
And are far up in Heaven—the stars I kneel to
In the sad, silent watches of my night;
While even in the meridian glare of day
I see them still—two sweetly scintillant
Venuses, unextinguished by the sun!

## TO ——.

Not long ago, the writer of these lines,
In the mad pride of intellectuality,
Maintained "the power of words"—denied
that ever

A thought arose within the human brain
Beyond the utterance of the human tongue:
And now, as if in mockery of that boast,
Two words—two foreign soft dissyllables—
Italian tones, made only to be murmured
By angels dreaming in the moonlit "dew
That hangs like chains of pearl on Hermon hill,"—
Have stirred from out the abysses of his heart,
Unthought-like thoughts that are the souls of thought,
Richer, far wilder, far diviner visions
Than even the seraph harper, Israfel,
(Who has "the sweetest voice of all God's creatures,")
Could hope to utter. And I! my spells are broken.
The pen falls powerless from my shivering hand.
With thy dear name as text, though bidden by thee,
I cannot write—I cannot speak or think—
Alas, I cannot feel; for 'tis not feeling,
This standing motionless upon the golden
Threshold of the wide-open gate of dreams,
Gazing, entranced, adown the gorgeous vista,
And thrilling as I see, upon the right,
Upon the left, and all the way along,
Amid unpurpled vapors, far away
To where the prospect terminates—*thee only.*

Mr. Stedman says: "It is so strange, so unlike anything that preceded it, so vague and yet so full of meaning, that of itself it might establish a new method. To me it seems an improvisation,
178 such as a violinist might play upon the instrument which had become his one thing of worth after the death of a companion had left him alone with his own soul."

the haunting imagery of Ulalume."
"weird monody" ULALUME. Memoir, p 76.

THE skies they were ashen and sober;
The leaves they were crisped and sere—
The leaves they were withering and sere—
It was night in the lonesome October
Of my most immemorial year;
It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,
In the misty mid region of Weir—
It was down by the dank tarn of Auber
In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.
Here once, through an alley Titanic,
Of cypress, I roamed with my Soul—
Of cypress, with Psyche, my Soul.
These were days when my heart was volcanic
As the scoriac rivers that roll—
As the lavas that restlessly roll
Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek
In the ultimate climes of the pole—
That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek
In the realms of the boreal pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober,
But our thoughts they were palsied and sere—
Our memories were treacherous and sere—
For we knew not the month was October,
And we marked not the night of the year—
(Ah, night of all nights in the year!)

We noted not the dim lake of Auber—
(Though once we had journeyed down here)—
Remembered not the dank tarn of Auber,
Nor the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

And now, as the night was senescent
And star-dials pointed to morn—
As the star-dials hinted of morn—
At the end of our path a liquescent
And nebulous luster was born,
Out of which a miraculous crescent
Arose with a duplicate horn—
Astarte's bediamonded crescent
Distinct with its duplicate horn.

And I said—"She is warmer than Dian:
She rolls through an ether of sighs—
She revels in a region of sighs:
She has seen that the tears are not dry on
These cheeks, where the worm never dies,
And has come past the stars of the Lion
To point us the path to the skies—
To the Lethean peace of the skies—
Come up, in despite of the Lion,
To shine on us with her bright eyes—
Come up through the lair of the Lion,
With love in her luminous eyes."

But Psyche, uplifting her finger,
Said—"Sadly this star I mistrust—
Her pallor I strangely mistrust:—
Oh, hasten!—oh, let us not linger!
Oh, fly!—let us fly!—for we must."

In terror she spoke, letting sink her
Wings until they trailed in the dust—
In agony sobbed letting sink her
Plumes till they trailed in the dust—
Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust.
I replied—"This is nothing but dreaming:
Let us on by this tremulous light!
Let us bathe in this crystalline light!
Its Sybilic splendor is beaming
With Hope and in Beauty to-night:—
See!—it flickers up the sky through the night!
Ah, we safely may trust to its gleaming
And be sure it will lead us aright—
We safely may trust to a gleaming
That cannot but guide us aright,
Since it flickers up to Heaven through the night."

Thus I pacified Psyche and kissed her,
And tempted her out of her gloom—
And conquered her scruples and gloom;
And we passed to the end of the vista,
But were stopped by the door of a tomb—
By the door of a legended tomb;
And I said—"What is written, sweet sister,
On the door of this legended tomb?"
She replied—"Ulalume—Ulalume—
'Tis the vault of thy lost Ulalume!"

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober
As the leaves that were crisped and sere—
As the leaves that were withering and sere,

And I cried—"It was surely October
On *this* very night of last year
That I journeyed—I journeyed down here—
That I brought a dread burden down here—
On this night of all nights in the year,
Ah, what demon has tempted me here?
Well I know, now, this dim lake of Auber—
This misty mid region of Weir.
Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber,
This ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir."

## THE BELLS.

I.

HEAR the sledges with the bells—
Silver bells!
What a world of merriment their melody foretells!
How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,
In the icy air of night!
While the stars that oversprinkle
All the heavens seem to twinkle
With a crystalline delight;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells
From the bells, bells, bells, bells
Bells, bells, bells—
From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.

II.

Hear the mellow wedding bells,
Golden bells!
What a world of happiness their harmony foretells!
Through the balmy air of night
How they ring out their delight!
From the molten-golden notes,
And all in tune,
What a liquid ditty floats
To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats
On the moon!
Oh, from out the sounding cells,
What a gush of euphony voluminously wells!
How it swells!
How it dwells
On the Future! how it tells
Of the rapture that impels
To the swinging and the ringing
Of the bells, bells, bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
To the rhyming and the chiming of the bells

III.

Hear the loud alarum bells—
Brazen bells!
What a tale of terror, now, their turbulency tells!
In the startled ear of night
How they scream out their affright!

Too much horrified to speak,
They can only shriek, shriek,
Out of tune,
In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire,
In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic fire
Leaping higher, higher, higher,
With a desperate desire,
And a resolute endeavor
Now—now to sit or never,
By the side of the pale-faced moon.
Oh, the bells, bells, bells!
What a tale their terror tells
Of Despair!
How they clang, and clash, and roar.
What a horror they outpour
On the bosom of the palpitating air!
Yet the ear it fully knows,
By the twanging,
And the clanging,
How the danger ebbs and flows:
Yet the ear distinctly tells,
In the jangling,
And the wrangling,
How the danger sinks and swells,
By the sinking or the swelling in the anger of the bells—
Of the bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
In the clamor and the clangor of the bells!

IV.

Hear the tolling of the bells—
Iron bells!
What a world of solemn thought their monody compels!
In the silence of the night,
How we shiver with affright,
At the melancholy menace of their tone;
For every sound that floats
From the rust within their throats
Is a groan.
And the people—ah, the people—
They that dwell up in the steeple,
All alone,
And who tolling, tolling, tolling,
In that muffled monotone,
Feel a glory in so rolling
On the human heart a stone—
They are neither man nor woman—
They are neither brute nor human—
They are Ghouls:
And their king it is who tolls;
And he rolls, rolls, rolls,
Rolls
A pæan from the bells!
And his merry bosom swells
With the pæan of the bells!
And he dances, and he yells;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the pæan of the bells—
Of the bells:

Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the throbbing of the bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells—
To the sobbing of the bells;
Keeping time, time, time,
As he knells, knells, knells,
In a happy Runic rhyme,
To the rolling of the bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells—,
To the tolling of the bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells—
Bells, bells, bells—
To the moaning and the groaning of the bells.

## AN ENIGMA.

"SELDOM we find," says Solomon Don Dunce,
"Half an ideal in the profoundest sonnet.
Through all the flimsy things we see at once
As easily as through a Naples bonnet—
Trash of all trash!—how *can* a lady don it?
Yet heavier far than your Petrarchan stuff—
Owl-downy nonsense that the faintest puff
Twirls into trunk-paper the while you con it."
And, veritably, Sol is right enough.
The general tuckermanities are arrant
Bubbles—ephemeral and *so* transparent—
But *this* is, now,—you may depend upon it—
Stable, opaque, immortal—all by dint
Of the dear names that lie concealed within 't.

ge note on p. 31 ANNABEL LEE. A memoir.
written after the death of his wife.

It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may know
By the name of Annabel Lee;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

*I* was a child and *she* was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea
But we loved with a love that was more than love—
I and my Annabel Lee;
With a love that the winged seraphs of heaven
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
My beautiful Annabel Lee;
So that her highborn kinsman came
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulcher
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,
Went envying her and me—
Yes!—that was the reason (as all men know,
In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud by night,
Chilling and killing my ANNABEL LEE.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those who were older than we—
Of many far wiser than we—
And neither the angels in heaven above,
Nor the demons down under the sea,
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE:

For the moon never beams, without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE:
And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE;
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride
In the sepulcher there by the sea,
In her tomb by the sounding sea.

## TO MY MOTHER.

Because I feel that in the Heavens above,
The angels, whispering to one another,
Can find, among their burning terms of love,
None so devotional as that of "Mother,"
Therefore by that dear name I long have called you—
You who are more than mother unto me,
And fill my heart of hearts, where death installed you,
In setting my Virginia's spirit free.
My mother—my own mother, who died early,
Was but the mother of myself; but you
Are mother to the one I loved so dearly,
And thus are dearer than the mother I knew
By that infinity with which my wife
Was dearer to my soul than its soul-life.

## THE HAUNTED PALACE.

In the greenest of our valleys
By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace—
Radiant palace—reared its head.

In the monarch Thought's dominion—
It stood there!
Never seraph spread a pinion!
Over fabric half so fair!

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
On its roof did float and flow,
(This—all this—was in the olden
Time long ago,)
And every gentle air that dallied,
In that sweet day,
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,
A winged odor went away.

Wanderers in that happy valley,
Through two luminous windows, saw
Spirits moving musically,
To a lutes' swell-tuned law,
Round about a throne where, sitting
(Porphyrogene!)
In state his glory well befitting,
The ruler of the realm was seen.

And all with pearl and ruby glowing
Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing
And sparkling evermore,
A troop of Echoes, whose sweet duty
Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,
The wit and wisdom of their king.

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
Assailed the monarch's high estate.
(Ah, let us mourn!—for never morrow
Shall dawn upon him desolate!)
And round about his home the glory
That blushed and bloomed,
Is but a dim-remembered story
Of the old time entombed.

And travelers, now, within that valley,
Through the red-litten windows see
Vast forms, that move fantastically
To a discordant melody,
While, like a ghastly rapid river,
Through the pale door
A hideous throng rush out forever
And laugh—but smile no more.

## THE CONQUEROR WORM.

Lo! 'tis a gala night
Within the lonesome latter years;
An angel throng, bewinged, bedight
In veils, and drowned in tears,
Sit in a theater, to see
A play of hopes and fears,
While the orchestra breathes fitfully
The music of the spheres.

Mimes, in the form of God on high,
Mutter and mumble low,
more somber still, than 'The Sleeper' is this,
which is a wild, despairing wail over the

And hither and thither fly—
  Mere puppets they, who come and go
At bidding of vast formless things
  That shift the scenery to and fro,
Flapping from out their Condor wings
  Invisible Woe!

That motley drama—oh, be sure
  It shall not be forgot!
With its Phantom chased for evermore,
  By a crowd that seize it not,
Through a circle that ever returneth in
  To the self-same spot,
And much of Madness, and more of Sin
  And Horror the soul of the plot.

But see, amid the mimic rout
  A crawling shape intrude!
A blood-red thing that writhes from out
  The scenic solitude!
It writhes!—it writhes!—with mortal pangs
  The mimes become its food,
And the angels sob at vermin fangs
  In human gore imbued.

Out—out are the lights—out all!
  And, over each quivering form,
The curtain, a funeral pall,
  Comes down with the rush of a storm,
And the angels, all pallid and wan,
  Uprising, unveiling, affirm
That the play is the tragedy, "Man,"
  And its hero the Conqueror Worm.

## TO F——S S. O——D.

Thou wouldst be loved?—then let thy heart
From its present pathway part not!
Being everything which now thou art,
Be nothing which thou art not.
So with the world thy gentle ways,
Thy grace, thy more than beauty,
Shall be an endless theme of praise,
And love—a simple duty.

## TO ONE IN PARADISE.

Thou wast that all to me, love,
For which my soul did pine—
A green isle in the sea, love,
A fountain and a shrine,
All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers,
And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last!
Ah, starry Hope! that didst arise
But to be overcast!
A voice from out the Future cries,
"On! on!"—but o'er the Past
(Dim gulf!) my spirit hovering lies
Mute, motionless, aghast!

For, alas! alas! with me
The light of Life is o'er!
"No more—no more—no more!—"
(Such language holds the solemn sea
To the sands upon the shore)
Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,
Or the stricken eagle soar!

And all my days are trances,
And all my nightly dreams
Are where thy dark eye glances,
And where thy footstep gleams—
In what ethereal dances,
By what eternal streams.

## THE VALLEY OF UNREST.

*Once* it smiled a silent dell
Where the people did not dwell;
They had gone unto the wars,
Trusting to the mild-eyed stars,
Nightly, from their azure towers,
To keep watch above the flowers,
In the midst of which all day
The red sun-light lazily lay.
*Now* each visitor shall confess
The sad valley's restlessness.
Nothing there is motionless—
Nothing save the airs that brood
Over the magic solitude.

Ah, by no wind are stirred those trees
That palpitate like the chill seas
Around the misty Hebrides!
Ah, by no wind those clouds are driven
That rustle through the unquiet Heaven
Uneasily, from morn till even,
Over the violets there that lie
In myriad types of the human eye—
Over the lilies there that wave
And weep above a nameless grave!
They wave:—from out their fragrant tops
Eternal dews come down in drops.
They weep:—from off their delicate stems
Perennial tears descend in gems.

## THE CITY IN THE SEA.

Lo! Death has reared himself a throne
In a strange city lying alone
Far down within the dim West,
Where the good and the bad and the worst and the best
Have gone to their eternal rest.
Their shrines and palaces and towers
(Time-eaten towers that tremble not!)
Resemble nothing that is ours.
Around, by lifting winds forgot,
Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.

No rays from the holy heaven come down
On the long night-time of that town;

But light from out the lurid sea
Streams up the turrets silently—
Gleams up the pinnacles far and free—
Up domes—up spires—up kingly halls—
Up fanes—up Babylon-like walls—
Up shadowy long-forgotten bowers
Of sculptured ivy and stone flowers—
Up many and many a marvelous shrine
Whose wreathed friezes intertwine
The viol, the violet, and the vine.
Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.
So blend the turrets and shadows there
That all seem pendulous in air,
While from a proud tower in the town
Death looks gigantically down.

There open fanes and gaping graves
Yawn level with the luminous waves
But not the riches there that lie
In each idol's diamond eye—
Not the gayly-jeweled dead
Tempt the waters from their bed;
For no ripples curl, alas!
Along that wilderness of glass—
No swellings tell that winds may be
Upon some far-off happier sea—
No heavings hint that winds have been
On seas less hideously serene.
But lo, a stir is in the air!
The wave—there is a movement there!
As if the towers had thrust aside,
In slightly sinking, the dull tide—

As if their tops had feebly given
A void within the filmy Heaven.
The waves have now a redder glow—
The hours are breathing faint and low—
And when, amid no earthly moans,
Down, down that town shall settle hence,
Hell, rising from a thousand thrones,
Shall do it reverence.

## THE SLEEPER.

At midnight, in the month of June,
I stand beneath the mystic moon.
An opiate vapor, dewy, dim,
Exhales from out her golden rim,
And, softly dripping, drop by drop,
Upon the quiet mountain top,
Steals drowsily and musically
Into the universal valley.
The rosemary nods upon the grave;
The lily lolls upon the wave;
Wrapping the fog about its breast,
The ruin molders into rest;
Looking like Lethe, see! the lake
A conscious slumber seems to take,
And would not, for the world, awake.
All Beauty sleeps!—and lo! where lies
Her casement open to the skies,
Irene, with her Destinies!

Oh, lady bright! can it be right—
This window open to the night?

The wanton airs, from the tree-top,
Laughingly through the lattice drop—
The bodiless airs, a wizard rout,
Flit through thy chamber in and out
And wave the curtain canopy
So fitfully—so fearfully—
Above the closed and fringed lid
'Neath which thy slumb'ring soul lies hid,
That, o'er the floor and down the wall,
Like ghosts the shadows rise and fall!
Oh, lady dear, hast thou no fear?
Why and what art thou dreaming here?
Sure thou art come o'er far-off seas,
A wonder to these garden trees!
Strange is thy pallor! strange thy dress!
Strange, above all, thy length of tress,
And this all solemn silentness!

The lady sleeps! Oh, may her sleep,
Which is enduring, so be deep!
Heaven have her in its sacred keep
This chamber changed for one more holy,
This bed for one more melancholy,
I pray to God that she may lie
Forever with unopened eye,
While the dim sheeted ghosts go by!

My love, she sleeps! Oh, may her sleep,
As it is lasting, so be deep!
Soft may the worms about her creep!
Far in the forest, dim and old,
For her may some tall vault unfold—

Some vault that oft hath flung its black
And winged pannels fluttering back,
Triumphant, o'er the crested palls,
Of her grand family funerals—
Some sepulcher, remote, alone,
Against whose portal she hath thrown,
In childhood, many an idle stone—
Some tomb from out whose sounding door
She ne'er shall force an echo more.
Thrilling to think, poor child of sin!
It was the dead who groaned within.

## SILENCE.

THERE are some qualities—some incorporate things,
That have a double life, which thus is made
A type of that twin entity which springs
From matter and light, evinced in solid and shade.
There is a two-fold *Silence*—sea and shore—
Body and soul. One dwells in lonely places,
Newly with grass o'ergrown; some solemn graces.
Some human memories and tearful lore,
Render him terrorless: his name's "No More,"
He is the corporate Silence: dread him not!
No power hath he of evil in himself;
But should some urgent fate (untimely lot!)
Bring thee to meet his shadow (nameless elf,
That haunteth the lone regions where hath trod
No foot of man,) commend thyself to God!

## A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM.

Take this kiss upon the brow!
And, in parting from you now,
Thus much let me avow—
You are not wrong, who deem
That my days have been a dream;
Yet if hope has flown away
In a night, or in a day,
In a vision, or in none,
Is it therefore the less *gone?*
*All* that we see or seem
Is but a dream within a dream.

I stand amid the roar
Of a surf-tormented shore,
And I hold with my hand
Grains of the golden sand—
How few! yet how they creep
Through my fingers to the deep,
While I weep—while I weep!
O God! can I not grasp
Them with a tighter clasp?
O God! can I not save
*One* from the pitiless wave?
Is *all* that we see or seem
But a dream within a dream?

## DREAMLAND.

By a route obscure and lonely,
Haunted by ill angels only,
Where an Eidolon, named NIGHT,
On a black throne reigns upright,
I have reached these lands but newly
From an ultimate dim Thule—
From a wild weird clime that lieth, sublime,
Out of SPACE—out of TIME.

Bottomless vales and boundless floods,
And chasms, and caves, and Titan woods,
With forms that no man can discover
For the dews that drip all over;
Mountains toppling evermore
Into seas without a shore;
Seas that restlessly aspire,
Surging, unto skies of fire;
Lakes that endlessly outspread
Their lone waters—lone and dead,—
Their still waters— still and chilly
With the snows of the lolling lily.

By the lakes that thus outspread
Their lone waters, lone and dead—
Their sad waters, sad and chilly
With the snows of the lolling lily,—

By the mountains—near the river
Murmuring lowly, murmuring ever,—
By the gray woods,—by the swamp
Where the toad and the newt encamp,—
By the dismal tarns and pools
Where dwell the Ghouls—
By each spot the most unholy—
In each nook most melancholy,—
There the traveler meets aghast
Sheeted Memories of the Past—
Shrouded forms that start and sigh
As they pass the wanderer by—
White-robed forms of friends long given,
In agony, to the Earth—and Heaven.

For the heart whose woes are legion
'Tis a peaceful, soothing region—
For the spirit that walks in shadow
'Tis—oh 'tis an Eldorado!
But the traveler, traveling through it,
May not—dare not openly view it;
Never its mysteries are exposed
To the weak human eye unclosed;
So wills its King, who hath forbid
The uplifting of the fringed lid;
And thus the sad Soul that here passes
Beholds it but through darkened glasses.
By a route obscure and lonely,
Haunted by ill angels only,
Where an Eidolon, named NIGHT,
On a black throne reigns upright,
I have wandered home but newly
From this ultimate dim Thule.

## TO ZANTE.

FAIR isle, that from the fairest of all flowers,
Thy gentlest of all gentle names dost take!
How many memories of what radiant hours
At sight of thee and thine at once awake!
How many scenes of what departed bliss!
How many thoughts of what entombed hopes!
How many visions of a maiden that is
No more—no more upon thy verdant slopes!
*No more!* alas, that magical sad sound
Transforming all! Thy charms shall please *no more!*
Thy memory *no more!* Accursed ground
Henceforth I hold thy flower-enameled shore,
O hyacinthine isle! O purple Zante!
"Isola d'oro! Fior di Levante!"

## EULALIE.

I DWELT alone
In a world of moan,
And my soul was a stagnant tide,

Till the fair and gentle Eulalie became my
blushing bride—
Till the yellow-haired young Eulalie became
my smiling bride.

Ah, less—less bright
The stars of the night
Than the eyes of the radiant girl!
And never a flake
That the vapor can make
With the moon-tints of purple and pearl,
Can vie with the modest Eulalie's most un-
regarded curl—
Can compare with the bright-eyed Eulalie's
most humble and careless curl.

Now Doubt—now Pain
Come never again,
For her soul gives me sigh for sigh,
And all day long
Shines, bright and strong,
Astarte within the sky,
While ever to her dear Eulalie upturns her
matron eye—
While ever to her young Eulalie upturns her
violet eye.

## ELDORADO.

Gaily bedight,
A gallant knight,
In sunshine and in shadow,
Had journeyed long,
Singing a song,
In search of Eldorado.

But he grew old—
This knight so bold—
And o'er his heart a shadow
Fell as he found
No spot of ground
That looked like Eldorado.

And, as his strength
Failed him at length,
He met a pilgrim shadow—
"Shadow," said he,
"Where can it be—
This land of Eldorado?"

"Over the Mountains
Of the Moon,
Down the Valley of the Shadow,
Ride, boldly ride,"
The shade replied,—
"If you seek for Eldorado!"

## ISRAFEL.*

In Heaven a spirit doth dwell
  "Whose heart-strings are a lute;"
None sing so wildly well
As the angel Israfel,
And the giddy stars (so legends tell)
Ceasing their hymns, attend the spell
  Of his voice, all mute.

Tottering above
  In her highest noon,
  The enamored moon
Blushes with love,
  While, to listen, the red levin
  (With the rapid Pleiads, even,
  Which were seven,)
  Pauses in Heaven.

And they say (the starry choir
  And the other listening things)
That Israfeli's fire
Is owing to that lyre
  By which he sits and sings—
The trembling living wire
  Of those unusual strings.

*And the angel Israfel, whose heart-strings are a lute, and who has the sweetest voice of all God's creatures.—KORAN.

But the skies that angels trod,
Where deep thoughts are a duty—
Where Love's a grown up God—
Where the Houri glances are
Imbued with all the beauty
Which we worship in a star.

Therefore, thou art not wrong,
Israfeli, who despisest
An unimpassioned song;
To thee the laurels belong,
Best bard, because the wisest!
Merrily live, and long!

The ecstasies above
With thy burning measures suit—
Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,
With the fervor of thy lute—
Well may the stars be mute!

Yes, Heaven is thine, but this
Is a world of sweets and sours;
Our flowers are merely—flowers,
And the shadow of thy perfect bliss
Is the sunshine of ours.

If I could dwell
Where Israfel
Hath dwelt, and he where I,
He might not sing so wildly well
A mortal melody,
While a bolder note than this might swell
From my lyre within the sky.

Stedman says of this - "For repose, for delicate & unstudied melody, it is one of Poe's truest poems & the tenderest



## FOR ANNIE.

THANK Heaven! the crisis—
The danger is past,
And the lingering illness
Is over at last—
And the fever called "Living"
Is conquered at last.

Sadly, I know
I am shorn of my strength,
And no muscle I move
As I lie at full length—
But no matter!—I feel
I am better at length.

And I rest so composed,
Now, in my bed,
That any beholder
Might fancy me dead—
Might start at beholding me,
Thinking me dead.

The moaning and groaning,
The sighing and sobbing,
Are quieted now,
With that horrible throbbing
At heart:—ah, that horrible,
Horrible throbbing!

The sickness—the nausea—
  The pitiless pain—
Have ceased, with the fever
  That maddened my brain—
With the fever called "Living"
  That burned in my brain.

And oh! of all tortures
  *That* torture the worst
Has abated—the terrible
  Torture of thirst
For the naphthaline river
  Of Passion accurst:—
I have drank of a water
  That quenches all thirst:—

Of a water that flows,
  With a lullaby sound,
From a spring but a very few
  Feet under ground—
From a cavern not very far
  Down under ground.

And ah! let it never
  Be foolishly said
That my room it is gloomy
  And narrow my bed;
For man never slept
  In a different bed—
And, to *sleep*, you must slumber
  In just such a bed.

My tantalized spirit
  Here blandly reposes.
Forgetting, or never
  Regretting its roses—
Its old agitations
  Of myrtles and roses:

For now, while so quietly
  Lying, it fancies
A holier odor
  About it, of pansies—
A rosemary odor,
  Commingled with pansies—
With rue and the beautiful
  Puritan pansies.

And so it lies happily,
  Bathing in many
A dream of the truth
  And the beauty of Annie
Drowned in a bath
  Of the tresses of Annie.

She tenderly kissed me,
  She fondly caressed,
And then I fell gently
  To sleep on her breast—
Deeply to sleep
  From the heaven of her breast.

When the light was extinguished,
  She covered me warm
And she prayed to the angels
  To keep me from harm—

To the queen of the angels
To shield me from harm.

And I lie so composedly,
Now, in my bed,
(Knowing her love)
That you fancy me dead—
And I rest so contentedly,
Now in my bed,
(With her love at my breast)
That you fancy me dead—
That you shudder to look at me,
Thinking me dead:

But my heart it is brighter
Than all of the many
Stars in the sky,
For it sparkles with Annie—
It glows with the light
Of the love of my Annie—
With the thought of the light
Of the eyes of my Annie.

## TO ——.

I HEED not that my earthly lot
Hath—little of Earth in it—
That years of love have been forgot
In the hatred of a minute:—
I mourn not that the desolate
Are happier, sweet, than I,
But that *you* sorrow for *my* fate
Who am a passer by.

## BRIDAL BALLAD.

THE ring is on my hand,
And the wreath is on my brow;
Satins and jewels grand
Are all at my command,
And I am happy now.

And my lord he loves me well;
But, when first he breathed his vow,
I felt my bosom swell—
For the words rang as a knell,
And the voice seemed *his* who fell
In the battle down the dell,
And who is happy now.

But he spoke to re-assure me,
And he kissed my pallid brow,
While a reverie came o'er me,
And to the church-yard bore me,
And I sighed to him before me,
Thinking him dead D'Elormie,
"Oh, I am happy now!"

And thus the words were spoken,
And this the plighted vow,
And, though my faith be broken,
And, though my heart be broken,
Behold the golden token
That *proves* me happy now!

Would God I could awaken?
For I dream I know not how,
And my soul is sorely shaken
Lest an evil step be taken,—
Lest the dead who is forsaken
May not be happy now.

## TO F——.

Beloved! amid the earnest woes
That crowd around my earthly path—
(Drear path, alas! where grows
Not even one lonely rose)—
My soul at least a solace hath
In dreams of thee, and therein knows
An Eden of bland repose.

And thus thy memory is to me
Like some enchanted far-off isle
In some tumultuous sea—
Some ocean throbbing far and free
With storms—but where meanwhile
Serenest skies continually
Just o'er that one bright island smile.

# SCENES FROM "POLITIAN."

AN UNPUBLISHED DRAMA.

## I.

ROME.—A Hall in a Palace. Alessandra and Castiglione.

*Alessandra.* Thou art sad, Castiglione.
*Castiglione.* Sad!—not I.
Oh, I'm the happiest, happiest man in Rome!
A few days more, thou knowest, my Alessandra,
Will make thee mine. Oh, I am very happy!
*Aless.* Methinks thou hast a singular way of showing
Thy happiness!—what ails thee, cousin of mine?
Why didst thou sigh so deeply?
*Cas.* Did I sigh?
I was not conscious of it. It is a fashion,
A silly—a most silly fashion I have
When I am *very* happy. Did I sigh? (*sighing.*)
*Aless.* Thou didst. Thou art not well. Thou hast indulged
Too much of late, and I am vexed to see it.
Late hours and wine, Castiglione,—these
Will ruin thee! thou art already altered—

Thy looks are haggard—nothing so wears away
The constitution as late hours and wine.
*Cas.* (*musing.*) Nothing, fair cousin, nothing—not even deep sorrow—
Wears it away like evil hours and wine.
I will amend.
*Aless.* Do it! I would have thee drop
Thy riotous company, too—fellows low-born—
Ill suit the like with old Di Broglio's heir
And Alessandra's husband.
*Cas.* I will drop them.
*Aless.* Thou wilt—thou must. Attend thou also more
To thy dress and equipage—they are over plain
For thy lofty rank and fashion—much depends
Upon appearances.
*Cas.* I'll see to it.
*Aless.* Then see to it!—pay more attention, sir,
To a becoming carriage—much thou wantest
In dignity.
*Cas.* Much, much, oh much I want
In proper dignity.
*Aless.* (*haughtily.*) Thou mockest me, sir!
*Cas.* (*abstractedly.*) Sweet, gentle Lalage!
*Aless.* Heard I aright?
I speak to him—he speaks of Lalage!
Sir Count! (*places her hand on his shoulder*) what art thou dreaming? he's not well!
What ails thee, sir?

*Cas.* (*starting.*) Cousin! fair cousin!—madam!
I crave thy pardon—indeed I am not well—
Your hand from off my shoulder, if you please.
This air is most oppressive!—Madam—the Duke!

*Enter Di Broglio.*

*Di Broglio.* My son, I've news for thee!—hey?—what's the matter? (*observing Alessandra.*)
I' the pouts? Kiss her, Castiglione! kiss her,
You dog! and make it up, I say, this minute!
I've news for you both. Politian is expected
Hourly in Rome—Politian, Earl of Leicester!
We'll have him at the wedding. 'Tis his first visit
To the imperial city.

*Aless.* What? Politian
Of Britain, Earl of Leicester?

*Di Brog.* The same, my love.
We'll have him at the wedding. A man quite young
In years, but gray in fame. I have not seen him,
But Rumor speaks of him as of a prodigy
Pre-eminent in arts and arms, and wealth,
And high descent. We'll have him at the wedding.

*Aless.* I have heard much of this Politian.
Gay, volatile and giddy—is he not?
And little given to thinking.

*Di Brog.* Far from it, love.
No branch, they say, of all philosophy
So deep abstruse he has not mastered it.

Learned as few are learned.
*Aless.* 'Tis very strange!
I have known men have seen Politian
And sought his company. They speak of him
As one who entered madly into life,
Drinking the cup of pleasure to the dregs.
*Cas.* Ridiculous! Now *I* have seen Politian
And know him well—nor learned nor mirthful he.
He is a dreamer and a man shut out
From common passions.
*Di Brog.* Children, we disagree.
Let us go forth and taste the fragrant air
Of the garden. Did I dream, or did I hear
Politian was a *melancholy* man? (*exeunt.*)

## II.

ROME.—A lady's apartment, with a window open, and looking into a garden. Lalage, in deep mourning, reading at a table on which lie some books and a hand-mirror. In the background, Jacinta (a servant-maid) leans carelessly upon a chair.

*Lal.* Jacinta! is it thou?
*Jac.* (*pertly.*) Yes, ma'am, I'm here.
*Lal.* I did not know, Jacinta, you were in waiting.
Sit down!—let not my presence trouble you—
Sit down!—for I am humble, most humble.
*Jac.* (*aside.*) 'Tis time.
(*Jacinta seats herself in a side-long manner upon the chair, resting her elbows upon the back, and regarding her mistress with a contemptuous look. Lalage continues to read.*)

*Lal.* "It in another climate," so he said,
"Bore a bright golden flower, but not i' this soil!"
(*pauses—turns over some leaves and resumes.*)
"No lingering winters there, nor snow, nor shower—
"But Ocean ever to refresh mankind
"Breathes the shrill spirit of the western wind."
Oh, beautiful!—most beautiful!—how like
To what my fevered soul doth dream of Heaven!
O happy land! (*pauses.*) She died!—the maiden died!
O still more happy maiden who couldst die!
Jacinta!
(*Jacinta returns no answer, and Lalage presently resumes.*)
Again!—a similar tale
Told of a beauteous dame beyond the sea!
Thus speaketh one Ferdinand in the words of the play—
"She died full young"—one Bossola answers him—
"I think not so—her infelicity
"Seemed to have years too many"—Ah, luckless lady!
Jacinta! (*still no answer.*)
Here's a far sterner story
But like—oh, very like in its despair—
Of that Egyptian queen, winning so easily
A thousand hearts—losing at length her own.

She died. Thus endeth the history—and her
maids
Lean over her and weep—two gentle maids
With gentle names—Eiros and Charmion!
Rainbow and Dove!——Jacinta!
*Jac.* (*pettishly.*) Madam, what *is* it?
*Lal.* Wilt thou, my good Jacinta, be so kind
As go down in the library and bring me
The Holy Evangelists.
*Jac.* Pshaw! (*exit.*)
*Lal.* If there be balm
For the wounded spirit in Gilead it is there!
Dew in the night-time of my bitter trouble
Will there be found—"dew sweeter far than
that
Which hangs like chains of pearl on Hermon
hill."
(*re-enter Jacinta, and throws a volume on
the table.*)
There, ma'am, 's the book. Indeed she is very
troublesome. (*aside.*)
*Lal.* (*astonished.*) What didst thou say,
Jacinta? Have done aught
To grieve thee or to vex thee?—I am sorry.
For thou hast served me long and ever been
Trustworthy and respectful. (*resumes her
reading.*)
*Jac.* I can't believe
She has any more jewels—no—no—she gave
me all. (*aside.*)
*Lal.* What didst thou say, Jacinta? Now
I bethink me
Thou hast not spoken lately of thy wedding.

How fares good Ugo?—and when is it to be?
Can I do aught?—is there no farther aid
Thou needest, Jacinta?
*Jac.* Is there no *farther* aid?
That's meant for me. (*aside*) I'm sure, Madam, you need not
Be always throwing those jewels in my teeth.
*Lal.* Jewels! Jacinta,—now indeed, Jacinta,
I thought not of the jewels.
*Jac.* Oh! perhaps not!
But then I might have sworn it. After all,
There's Ugo says the ring is only paste,
For he's sure the Count Castiglione never
Would have given a real diamond to such as you;
And at the best I'm certain, Madam, you cannot
Have use for jewels *now*. But I might have sworn it. (*exit.*)
(*Lalage bursts into tears and leans her head upon the table—after a short pause raises it.*)
*Lal.* Poor Lalage!—and is it come to this?
Thy servant maid!—but courage!—'tis but a viper
Whom thou has cherished to sting thee to the soul! (*taking up the mirror.*)
Ha! here at least's a friend—too much a friend
In earlier days—a friend will not deceive thee.
Fair mirror and true! now tell me (for thou canst)
A tale—a pretty tale—and heed thou not

Though it be rife with woe. It answers me.
It speaks of sunken eyes, and wasted cheeks,
And Beauty long deceased—remembers me
Of Joy departed—Hope, the Seraph Hope,
Inurned and entombed!—now, in a tone
Low, sad, and solemn, but most audible.
Whispers of early grave untimely yawning
For ruined maid. Fair mirror and true!—
thou liest not!
*Thou* hast no end to gain—no heart to break—
Castiglione lied who said he loved——
Thou true—he false!—false!—false!

(*while she speaks, a monk enters her apartment, and approaches unobserved.*)

*Monk.* Refuge thou hast,
Sweet daughter! in Heaven. Think of eternal
things!
Give up thy soul to penitence, and pray!

*Lal.* (*arising hurriedly.*) I *cannot* pray!—
My soul is at war with God!
The frightful sounds of merriment below
Disturb my senses—go! I cannot pray—
The sweet airs from the garden worry me!
Thy presence grieves me—go!—thy priestly
raiment
Fills me with dread—thy ebony crucifix
With horror and awe!

*Monk.* Think of thy precious soul!

*Lal.* Think of my early days!—think of my
father
And mother in Heaven! think of our quiet
home,
And the rivulet that ran before the door!

Think of my little sisters!—think of them!
And think of me!—think of my trusting love
And confidence—his vows—my ruin—think—
think
Of my unspeakable misery!——begone!
Yet stay! yet stay!—what was it thou saidst
of prayer
And penitence? Didst thou not speak of faith
And vows before the throne?
*Monk.* I did.
*Lal.* 'Tis well.
There *is* a vow were fitting should be made—
A solemn vow!
*Monk.* Daughter, this zeal is well!
*Lal.* Father, this zeal is anything but well!
Hast thou a crucifix fit for this thing?
A crucifix whereon to register
This sacred vow? (*he hands her his own.*)
Not that—Oh! no!—no!—no (*shuddering.*)
Not that! Not that—I tell thee, holy man,
Thy raiments and thy ebony cross affright
me!
Stand back! I have a crucifix myself,—
*I* have a crucifix! Methinks 'twere fitting.
The deed—the vow—the symbol of the deed—
And the deed's register should tally, father!
(*draws a cross-handled dagger and
raises it on high.*)
Behold the cross wherewith a vow like mine
Is written in Heaven!
*Monk.* Thy words are madness, daughter,
And speak a purpose unholy—thy lips are
livid—

Thine eyes are wild—tempt not the wrath divine!
Pause ere too late!—oh be not—be not rash!
Swear not the oath—oh swear it not!
*Lal.* 'Tis sworn!

## III.

An apartment in a palace. Politian and Baldazzar.

*Baldazzar.* Arouse thee now, Politian!
Thou must not—nay indeed, indeed, thou shalt not
Give way unto these humors. Be thyself!
Shake off the idle fancies that beset thee,
And live, for now thou diest!
*Politian.* Not so, Baldazzar!
*Surely* I live.
*Bal.* Politian, it doth grieve me
To see thee thus.
*Pol.* Baldazzar, it doth grieve me
To give thee cause for grief, my honored friend.
Command me, sir! what wouldst thou have me do?
At thy behest I will shake off that nature
Which from my forefathers I did inherit,
Which with my mother's milk I did imbibe,
And be no more Politian, but some other.
Command me, sir!
*Bal.* To the field then—to the field—
To the senate or the field.
*Pol.* Alas! alas!
There is an imp would follow me even there!

There is an imp *hath* followed me even there!
There is——what voice was that?
*Bal.* I heard it not.
I heard not any voice except thine own,
And the echo of thine own.
*Pol.* Then I but dreamed,
*Bal.* Give not thy soul to dreams: the camp—the court
Befit thee—Fame awaits thee—Glory calls—
And her the trumpet-tongued thou wilt not hear
In hearkening to imaginary sounds
And phantom voices.
*Pol.* It *is* a phantom voice!
Didst thou not hear it *then?*
*Bal.* I heard it not
*Pol.* Thou heardst it not!——Baldazzar, speak no more
To me, Politian, of thy camps and courts.
Oh! I am sick, sick, sick, even unto death,
Of the hollow and high-sounding vanities
Of the populous Earth! Bear with me yet awhile!
We have been boys together—school-fellows—
And now are friends—yet shall not be so long—
For in the eternal city thou shalt do me
A kind and gentle office, and a Power—
A Power august, benignant and supreme—
Shall then absolve thee of all farther duties
Unto thy friend.
*Bal.* Thou speakest a fearful riddle
I *will* not understand.

*Pol.* Yet now as Fate
Approaches, and the Hours are breathing low,
The sands of Time are changed to golden grains,
And dazzle me, Baldazzar. Alas! alas!
I *cannot* die, having within my heart
So keen a relish for the beautiful
As hath been kindled within it. Methinks the air
Is calmer now than it was wont to be—
Rich melodies are floating in the winds—
A rarer loveliness bedecks the earth—
And with a holier luster the quiet moon
Sitteth in Heaven.—Hist! hist! thou canst not say
Thou hearest not *now*, Baldazzar?
*Bal.* Indeed I hear not.
*Pol.* Not hear it!—listen! now listen!—the faintest sound
And yet the sweetest that ear ever heard!
A lady's voice!—and sorrow in the tone!
Baldazzar, it oppresses me like a spell!
Again!—again!—how solemnly it falls
Into my heart of hearts! that eloquent voice
Surely I never heard—yet it were well
Had I *but* heard it with its thrilling tones
In earlier days!
*Bal.* I myself hear it now.
Be still!—the voice, if I mistake not greatly,
Proceeds from yonder lattice—which you may see
Very plainly through the window—it belongs,

Does it not? unto this palace of the Duke.
The singer is undoubtedly beneath
The roof of his Excellency—and perhaps
Is even that Alessandra of whom he spoke
As the betrothed of Castiglione,
His son and heir.

*Pol.* Be still!—it comes again!

*Voice* (*very faintly.*) "And is thy heart so strong
As for to leave me thus
Who hath loved thee so long
In wealth and wo among?
And in the heart so strong
As for to leave me thus?
Say nay—say nay!"

*Bal.* The song is English, and I oft have heard it
In merry England—never so plaintively—
Hist! hist! it comes again!

*Voice* (*more loudly,*) "Is it so strong
As for to leave me thus
Who hath loved thee so long
In wealth and wo among?
And is thy heart so strong
As for to leave me thus?
Say nay—say nay!"

*Bal.* 'Tis hushed and all is still!

*Pol.* All *is not* still.

*Bal.* Let us go down.

*Pol.* Go down, Baldazzar, go!

*Bal.* The hour is growing late—the Duke awaits us,—
Thy presence is expected in the hall
Below. What ails thee, Earl Politian?

*Voice* (*distinctly.*) "Who hath loved thee so long,
In wealth and wo among,
And is thy heart so strong?
Say nay—say nay!"

*Bal.* Let us descend!—'tis time. Politian, give
These fancies to the wind. Remember, pray,
Your bearing lately savored much of rudeness
Unto the Duke. Arouse thee! and remember!

*Pol.* Remember? I do. Lead on! I *do* remember. (*going.*)
Let us descend. Believe me I would give,
Freely would give the broad lands of my earldom
To look upon the face hidden by yon lattice—
"To gaze upon that veiled face, and hear
Once more that silent tongue."

*Bal.* Let me beg you, sir,
Descend with me—the Duke may be offended.
Let us go down, I pray you.

(*Voice loudly.*) *Say nay!—say nay.*

*Pol.* (*aside.*) 'Tis strange!—'tis very strange—methought the voice
Chimed in with my desires and bade me stay!
(*approaching the window.*)
Sweet voice! I heed thee, and will surely stay.
Now be this Fancy, by Heaven, or be it Fate,
Still will I not descend. Baldazzar, make
Apology unto the Duke for me;
I go not down to-night.

*Bal.* Your lordship's pleasure
Shall be attended to. Good-night, Politian.

*Pol.* Good-night, my friend, good-night.

## IV.

The gardens of a palace—Moonlight. Lalage and Politian.

*Lalage.* And dost thou speak of love
To *me*, Politian ?—dost thou speak of love
To Lalage ?—ah wo—ah wo is me !
This mockery is most cruel—most cruel indeed !

*Politian.* Weep not ! oh, sob not thus !—thy bitter tears
Will madden me. Oh, mourn not, Lalage—
Be comforted ! I know—I know it all,
And *still* I speak of love. Look at me, brightest,
And beautiful Lalage !—turn here thine eyes !
Thou askest me if I could speak of love,
Knowing what I know, and seeing what I have seen.
Thou askest me that—and thus I answer thee—
Thus on my bended knee I answer thee.
(*kneeling.*)
Sweet Lalage, *I love thee—love thee—love thee ;*
Thro' good and ill—thro' weal and wo *I love thee.*
Not mother, with her first-born on her knee,
Thrills with intenser love than I for thee.
Not on God's altar, in any time or clime,
Burned there a holier fire than burneth now
Within my spirit for *thee.* And do I love ?
(*arising.*)

Even for thy woes I love thee—even for thy
woes—
Thy beauty and thy woes.
*Lal.* Alas, proud Earl,
Thou dost forget thyself, remembering me!
How, in thy father's halls, among the maidens
Pure and reproachless, of thy princely line,
Could the dishonored Lalage abide?
Thy wife, and with a tainted memory—
My seared and blighted name, how would it
tally
With the ancestral honors of thy house,
And with thy glory?
*Pol.* Speak not to me of glory!
I hate—I loathe the name; I do abhor
The unsatisfactory and ideal thing.
Art thou not Lalage and I Politian?
Do I not love—art thou not beautiful—
What need we more? Ha! glory!—now speak
not of it:
By all I hold most sacred and most solemn—
By all my wishes now—my fears hereafter—
By all I scorn on earth and hope in heaven
There is no deed I would more glory in,
Than in thy cause to scoff at this same glory
And trample it under foot. What matters
it—
What matters it, my fairest, and my best,
That we go down unhonored and forgotten
Into the dust—so we descend together.
Descend together—and then—and then per-
chance——
*Lal.* Why dost thou pause, Politian?

*Pol.* And then perchance
*Arise* together, Lalage, and roam
The starry and quiet dwellings of the blest,
And still——
*Lal.* Why dost thou pause, Politian?
*Pol.* And still *together—together.*
*Lal.* Now Earl of Leicester!
Thou *lovest* me, and in my heart of hearts
I feel thou lovest me truly.
*Pol.* Oh, Lalage! (*throwing himself upon his knee.*)
And lovest thou *me?*
*Lal.* Hist! hush! within the gloom
Of yonder trees methought a figure past—
A spectral figure, solemn, and slow, and noiseless—
Like the grim shadow Conscience, solemn and noiseless. (*walks across and returns.*)
I was mistaken—'twas but a giant bough
Stirred by the autumn wind. Politian!
*Pol.* My Lalage—my love! why art thou moved!
Why dost thou turn so pale! Not Conscience' self,
Far less a shadow which thou likenest to it,
Should shake the firm spirit thus. But the night wind
Is chilly—and these melancholy boughs
Throw over all things a gloom.
*Lal.* Politian!
Thou speakest to me of love. Knowest thou the land
With which all tongues are busy—a land new found—

Miraculously found by one of Genoa—
A thousand leagues within the golden west?
A fairy land of flowers, and fruit, and sunshine,
And crystal lakes, and overarching forests,
And mountains, around whose towering summits the winds
Of Heaven untrammeled flow—which air to breathe
Is Happiness now, and will be Freedom hereafter
In days that are to come?
*Pol.* O, wilt thou—wilt thou
Fly to that Paradise—my Lalage, wilt thou
Fly thither with me? There Care shall be forgotten.
And Sorrow shall be no more, and Eros be all.
And life shall then be mine, for I will live
For thee, and in thine eyes—and thou shalt be
No more a mourner—but the radiant Joys
Shall wait upon thee, and the angel Hope
Attend thee ever; and I will kneel to thee
And worship thee, and call thee my beloved,
My own, my beautiful, my love, my wife,
My all;—oh, wilt thou—wilt thou, Lalage,
Fly thither with me?
*Lal.* A deed is to be done—
Castiglione lives!
*Pol.* And he shall die! (*exit.*)
*Lal.* (*after a pause.*) And—he—shall—die!
——alas
Castiglione die? Who spoke the words?
Where am I?—what was it he said?—Politian!
Thou *art* not gone—thou art not *gone*, Politian.

I *feel* thou art not gone—yet dare not look,
Lest I behold thee not; thou *couldst* not go
With those words upon thy lips—O, speak to me!
And let me hear thy voice—one word—one word,
To say thou art not gone,—one little sentence,
To say how thou dost scorn—how thou dost hate
My womanly weakness. Ha! ha! thou *art* not gone—
O speak to me! I *knew* thou wouldst not go!
I knew thou wouldst not, couldst not, *durst* not go.
Villain, thou *art* not gone—thou mockest me!
And thus I clutch thee—thus!———He is gone, he is gone—
Gone—gone. Where am I?——'tis well—'tis very well!
So that the blade be keen—the blow be sure,
'Tis well, 'tis *very* well—alas! alas!

## V.

The suburbs. Politian alone.

*Politian.* This weakness grows upon me. I am faint
And much I fear me ill—it will not do
To die ere I have lived!—Stay—stay thy hand,
O Azrael, yet awhile!—Prince of the Powers
Of Darkness and the Tomb, O pity me!
O pity me! let me not perish now,
In the budding of my Paradisal Hope!

Give me to live yet—yet a little while:
Tis I who pray for life—I who so late
Demanded but to die!—what sayeth the Count?

*Enter Baldazzar.*

*Baldazzar.* That knowing no cause of quarrel or of feud
Between the Earl Politian and himself,
He doth decline your cartel.
*Pol.* *What* didst thou say?
What answer was it you brought me, good Baldazzar?
With what excessive fragrance the zephyr comes
Laden from yonder bowers!—a fairer day,
Or one more worthy Italy, methinks
No mortal eyes have seen!—*what* said the Count?
*Bal.* That he, Castiglione, not being aware
Of any feud existing, or any cause
Of quarrel between your lordship and himself
Cannot accept the challenge.
*Pol.* It is most true—
All this is very true. When saw you, sir,
When saw you now, Baldazzar, in the frigid
Ungenial Britain which we left so lately,
A heaven so calm as this—so utterly free
From the evil taint of clouds?—and he did say?
*Bal.* No more, my lord, than I have told you, sir:
The Count Castiglione will not fight,
Having no cause for quarrel.
*Pol.* Now this is true—

All very true. Thou art my friend, Baldazzar,
And I have not forgotten it—thou'lt do me
A piece of service; wilt thou go back and say
Unto this man, that I, the Earl of Leicester,
Hold him a villain?—thus much, I prythee, say
Unto the Count—it is exceeding just
He should have cause for quarrel.

*Bal.* My lord!—my friend!———

*Pol.* (*aside.*) 'Tis he—he comes himself!
(*aloud.*) thou reasonest well.
I know what thou wouldst say—not send the message—
Well!—I will think of it—I will not send it.
Now prythee, leave me—hither doth come a person
With whom affairs of a most private nature
I would adjust.

*Bal.* I go—to-morrow we meet,
Do we not?—at the Vatican.

*Pol.* At the Vatican. (*Bal. exit*)

*Enter Castiglione.*

*Cas.* The Earl of Leicester here!

*Pol.* I *am* the Earl of Leicester, and thou seest,
Dost thou not? that I am here.

*Cas.* My lord, some strange,
Some singular mistake—misunderstanding—
Hath without doubt arisen; thou hast been urged
Thereby, in heat of anger, to address
Some words most unaccountable, in writing,
To me, Castiglione; the bearer being

Baldazzar, Duke of Surrey. I am aware
Of nothing which might warrant thee in this
thing,
Having given thee no offense. Ha!—am I
right?
'Twas a mistake?—undoubtedly—we all
Do err at times.
*Pol.* Draw, villain, and prate no more!
*Cas.* Ha!—draw?—and villain? have at thee
then at once,
Proud Earl! (*draws.*)
*Pol.* (*drawing.*) Thus to the expiatory
tomb,
Untimely sepulcher, I do devote thee
In the name of Lalage!
*Cas.* (*letting fall his sword and recoiling to
the extremity of the stage.*)
Of Lalage!
Hold off—thy sacred hand—avaunt I say!
Avaunt—I will not fight thee—indeed I dare
not.
*Pol.* Thou wilt not fight with me didst say,
Sir Count?
Shall I be baffled thus?—now this is well.
Didst say thou *darest* not? Ha!
*Cas.* I dare not—dare not—
Hold off thy hand—with that beloved name
So fresh upon thy lips I will not fight thee—
I cannot—dare not.
*Pol.* Now by my halidom
I do believe thee!—coward, I do believe thee!
*Cas.* Ha!—coward!—this may not be!
(*clutches his sword and staggers towards*

*Politian, but his purpose is changed before reaching him, and he falls upon his knee at the feet of the Earl.*)

Alas! my lord,
It is—it is—most true. In such a cause
I am the veriest coward. O pity me!

*Pol.* (*greatly softened.*) Alas!—I do—indeed I pity thee.

*Cas.* And Lalage———

*Pol.* Scoundrel!—arise, and die!

*Cas.* It needeth not be—thus—thus—O let me die
Thus on my bended knee. It were most fitting
That in this deep humiliation I perish.
For in the fight I will not raise a hand
Against thee, Earl of Leicester. Strike thou home— (*baring his bosom.*)
Here is no let nor hindrance to thy weapon—
Strike home. I *will not* fight thee.

*Pol.* Now's death and hell!
Am I not—am I not sorely—grievously tempted
To take thee at thy word? But mark me, sir:
Think not to fly me thus. Do thou prepare
For public insult in the streets—before
The eyes of the citizens. I'll follow thee—
Like an avenging spirit I'll follow thee,
Even unto death. Before those whom thou lovest—
Before all Rome, I'll taunt thee, villain, I'll taunt thee,—
Dost hear? with *cowardice*—thou *will not* fight me?

Thou liest! thou *shalt!* (*exit.*)

*Cas.* Now this indeed is just!
Most righteous, and most just, avenging Heaven!

# POEMS WRITTEN IN YOUTH.

# POEMS WRITTEN IN YOUTH.*

## SONNET—TO SCIENCE.

SCIENCE! true daughter of Old Time thou art!
Who alterest all things with thy peering eyes.
Why preyest thou thus upon the poet's heart,
Vulture, whose wings are dull realities?
How should he love thee? or how deem thee wise,
Who wouldst not leave him in his wandering
To seek for treasure in the jeweled skies,
Albeit he soared with an undaunted wing?
Hast thou not dragged Diana from her car?
And driven the Hamadryad from the wood
To seek a shelter in some happier star?
Hast thou not torn the Naiad from her flood,
The Elfin from the green grass, and from me
The summer dream beneath the tamarind tree?

* Private reasons—some of which have reference to the sin of plagiarism, and others to the date of Tennyson's first poems—have induced me, after some hesitation, to republish these, the crude compositions of my earliest boyhood. They are printed *verbatim*—without alteration from the original edition—the date of which is too remote to be judiciously acknowledged.—E. A. P.

# AL AARAAF.*

## Part I.

O! NOTHING earthly save the ray
(Thrown back from flowers) of Beauty's eye
As in these gardens where the day
Springs from the gems of Circassy;—
O! nothing earthly save the thrill
Of melody in woodland rill—
Or (music of the passion-hearted)
Joy's voice so peacefully departed,
That, like the murmur in the shell,
Its echo dwelleth and will dwell—
O, nothing of the dross of ours—
Yet all the beauty—all the flowers
That list our Love, and deck our bowers—
Adorn yon world afar, afar—
The wandering star.

'Twas a sweet time for Nesace—for there
Her world lay lolling on the golden air,
Near four bright suns—a temporary rest—
An oasis in desert of the blest.
Away—away—'mid seas of rays that roll
Empyrean splendor o'er th' unchained soul—

* A star was discovered by Tycho Brahe which appeared suddenly in the heavens—attained, in a few days, a brilliancy surpassing that of Jupiter—then as suddenly disappeared, and has never been seen since.

The soul that scarce (the billows are so dense)
Can struggle to its destin'd eminence—
To distant spheres, from time to time, she rode,
And late to ours, the favor'd one of God—
But, now, the ruler of an anchor'd realm,
She throws aside the scepter—leaves the helm,
And, amid incense and high spiritual hymns,
Laves in quadruple light her angel limbs.

Now happiest, loveliest in yon lovely Earth,
Whence sprang the "Idea of Beauty" into birth,
(Falling in wreaths thro' many a startled star,
Like woman's hair 'mid pearls, until, afar,
It lit on hills Achaian, and there dwelt),
She look'd into Infinity—and knelt.
Rich clouds, for canopies, about her curled—
Fit emblems of the model of her world—
Seen but in beauty—not impeding sight
Of other beauty glittering thro' the light—
A wreath that twined each starry form around,
And all the opal'd air in color bound.

All hurriedly she knelt upon a bed
Of flowers: of lilies such as rear'd the head
On the fair Capo Deucato,* and sprang
So eagerly around about to hang
Upon the flying footsteps of—deep pride—
Of her † who lov'd a mortal—and so died.
The Sephalica, budding with young bees,
Uprear'd its purple stem around her knees:

* On Santa Maura—olim Deucadia.
† Sappho.

And gemmy flower,* of Trebizond misnam'd—
Inmate of the highest stars, where erst it sham'd
All other loveliness: its honeyed dew
(The fabled nectar that the heathen knew)
Deliriously sweet, was dropp'd from Heaven,
And fell on gardens of the unforgiven
In Trebizond—and on a sunny flower
So like its own above, that, to this hour,
It still remaineth, torturing the bee
With madness, and unwonted reverie:
In Heaven, and all its environs, the leaf
And blossom of the fairy plant, in grief
Disconsolate linger—grief that hangs her head,
Repenting follies that full long have fled,
Heaving her white breast to the balmy air,
Like guilty beauty, chasten'd, and more fair:
Nyctanthes too, as sacred as the light
She fears to perfume, perfuming the night:
And Clytia † pondering between many a sun,
While pettish tears adown her petals run:
And that aspiring flower ‡ that sprang on Earth—
And died, ere scarce exalted into birth,

* This flower is much noticed by Leuwenhoeck and Tournefort. The bee feeding upon its blossom becomes intoxicated.

† Clytia—The Chrysanthemum Peruvianum, or, to employ a better-known term, the turnsol—which turns continually towards the sun, covers itself, like Peru, the country from which it comes, with dewy clouds which cool and refresh its flowers during the most violent heat of the day.—*B. de St. Pierre.*

‡ There is cultivated in the king's garden at Paris, a species of serpentine aloes without prickles, whose large

Bursting its odorous heart in spirit to wing
Its way to Heaven, from garden of a king:
And Valisnerian lotus * thither flown
From struggling with the waters of the Rhone:
And thy most lovely purple perfume, Zante! †
Isola d'oro!—Fior di Levante!
And the Nelumbo bud ‡ that floats forever
With Indian Cupid down the holy river—
Fair flowers, and fairy! to whose care is given
To bear the Goddess' song, in odors, up to Heaven: §

"Spirit! that dwellest where,
In the deep sky,
The terrible and fair,
In beauty vie!
Beyond the line of blue—
The boundary of the star
Which turneth at the view
Of thy barrier and thy bar—
Of the barrier overgone

and beautiful flower exhales a strong odor of the vanilla, during the time of its expansion, which is very short. It does not blow till towards the month of July—you then perceive it gradually open its petals—expand them—fade and die.—*St. Pierre.*

* There is found, in the Rhone a beautiful lily of the Valisnerian kind. Its stem will stretch to the length of three or four feet—thus preserving its head above water in the swellings of the river.

† The hyacinth.

‡ It is a fiction of the Indians, that Cupid was first seen floating in one of these down the river Ganges—and that he still loves the cradle of his childhood.

§ And golden vials full of odors which are the prayers of the saints.—*Rev. of St. John.*

By the comets who were cast
From their pride, and from their throne
To be drudges till the last—
To be carriers of fire
(The red fire of their heart)
With speed that may not tire
And with pain that shall not part—
Who livest—*that* we know—
In Eternity—we feel—
But the shadow of whose brow
What spirit shall reveal?
Tho' the beings whom thy Nesace,
Thy messenger hath known
Have dream'd for thy Infinity
A model of their own—*

* The Humanitarians held that God was to be understood as having really a human form.—*Vide Clarke's Sermons*, vol. 1, page 26, fol. edit.

The drift of Milton's argument leads him to employ language which would appear, at first sight, to verge upon their doctrine; but it will be seen immediately that he guards himself against the charge of having adopted one of the most ignorant errors of the dark ages of the Church.—*Dr. Sumner's Notes on Milton's Christian Doctrine.*

This opinion, in spite of many testimonies to the contrary, could never have been very general. Andeus, a Syrian of Mesopotamia, was condemned for the opinion, as heretical. He lived in the beginning of the fourth century. His disciples were called Anthropomorphites. —*Vide Du Pin.*

Among Milton's minor poems are these lines:—

Dicite sacorum præsides nemorum Deæ, etc.
Quis ille primus cujus ex imagine
Natura solers finxit humanum genus?
Eternus, incorruptus, æquævus polo,

Thy will is done, O God!
The star hath ridden high
Thro' many a tempest, but she rode
Beneath thy burning eye;
And here, in thought, to thee—
In thought that can alone
Ascend thy empire and so be
A partner of thy throne—
By winged Fantasy,*
My embassy is given,
Till secrecy shall knowledge be
In the environs of Heaven."

She ceas'd—and buried then her burning cheek
Abash'd, amid the lilies there, to seek
A shelter from the fervor of His eye;
For the stars trembled at the Deity.
She stirr'd not—breath'd not—for a voice was there
How solemnly pervading the calm air!
A sound of silence on the startled ear
Which dreamy poets name "the music of the sphere."
Ours is a world of words: Quiet we call
"Silence"—which is the merest word of all.
All Nature speaks, and ev'n ideal things
Flap shadowy sounds from visionary wings—

Unusque et universus exemplar Dei.—And afterwards,
Non qui profundum, cæcitas lumen dedit
Dircæus augur vidit hunc alto sinu, etc.

* Seltsamen Tochter Jovis
Seinem Schosskinde
Der Phantasie.—*Göethe.*

But ah! not so when, thus, in realms on high
The eternal voice of God is passing by,
And the red winds are withering in the sky!

"What tho' in worlds which sightless* cycles run,
Link'd to a little system, and one sun—
Where all my love is folly and the crowd
Still think my terrors but the thunder cloud,
The storm, the earthquake, and the ocean wrath—
(Ah! will they cross me in my angrier path?)
What tho' in worlds which own a single sun
The sands of Time grow dimmer as they run,
Yet thine is my resplendency, so given
To bear my secrets thro' the upper Heaven.
Leave tenantless thy crystal home, and fly,
With all thy train, athwart the moony sky—
Apart—like fire-flies in Sicilian night,†
And wing to other worlds another light!
Divulge the secrets of thy embassy
To the proud orbs that twinkle—and so be
To ev'ry heart a barrier and a ban
Lest the stars totter in the guilt of man!"

Up rose the maiden in the yellow night,
The single-mooned eve!—on Earth we plight
Our faith to one love—and one moon adore—
The birth-place of young Beauty had no more.

* Sightless—too small to be seen.—*Legge.*

† I have often noticed a peculiar movement of the fire-flies:—they will collect in a body and fly off, from a common center, into innumerable radii.

As sprang that yellow star from dawny hours
Up rose the maiden from her shrine of flowers,
And bent o'er sheeny mountain and dim plain
Her way—but left not yet her Therasæan
reign.*

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## Part II.

High on a mountain of enamel'd head—
Such as the drowsy shepherd on his bed
Of giant pasturage lying at his ease,
Raising his heavy eyelids, starts and sees
With many a mutter'd "hope to be forgiven"
What time the moon is quadrated in Heaven—
Of rosy head, that towering far away
Into the sunlit ether, caught the ray
Of sunken suns at eve—at noon of night,
While the moon danc'd with the fair stranger
light—
Uprear'd upon such height arose a pile
Of gorgeous columns on th' unburthen'd air,
Flashing from Parian marble that twin smile
Far down upon the wave that sparkled there,
And nursled the young mountain in its lair.
Of molten stars their pavement,† such as fall
Thro' the ebon air, besilvering the pall
Of their own dissolution, while they die—
Adorning then the dwellings of the sky.

* Therasæa, or Therasea, the island mentioned by Seneca, which, in a moment, arose from the sea to the eyes of astonished mariners.

† Some star which, from the ruin'd roof
Of shak'd Olympus, by mischance did fall.—*Milton.*

A dome, by linked light from Heaven let down,
Sat gently on these columns as a crown—
A window of one circular diamond, there,
Look'd out above into the purple air,
And rays from God shot down that meteor chain
And hallow'd all the beauty twice again,
Save when, between th' Empyrean and that ring,
Some eager spirit flapp'd his dusky wing.
But on the pillars Seraph eyes have seen
The dimness of this world; that grayish green
That Nature loves the best for Beauty's grave
Lurk'd in each cornice, round each architrave—
And every sculptur'd cherub thereabout
That from his marble dwelling peered out,
Seem'd earthly in the shadow of his niche—
Achaian statues in a world so rich?
Friezes from Tadmor and Persepolis,*
From Balbec, and the stilly, clear abyss
Of beautiful Gomorrah! O, the wave †
Is now upon thee—but too late to save!

* Voltaire, in speaking of Persepolis, says, "Je connais bien l'admiration qu'inspirent ces ruines—mais un palais érigé au pied d'une chaine de rochers stériles—peut-il être un chef-d'œuvre des arts!"

† "O, the wave"—Ula Deguisi is the Turkish appellation; but on its own shores it is called Bahar Loth, or Almotanah. There were undoubtedly more than two cities engulphed in the "dead sea." In the valley of Siddim were five—Adrah, Zeboin, Zoar, Sodom, and Gomorrah. Stephen of Byzantium mentions eight, and Strabo thirteen (engulphed)—but the last is out of all reason.

It is said [Tacitus, Strabo, Josephus, Daniel of St.

Sound loves to revel in a summer night;
Witness the murmur of the gray twilight
That stole upon the ear, in Eyraco,*
Of many a wild star gazer long ago
That stealeth ever on the ear of him
Who, musing, gazeth on the distance dim,
And sees the darkness coming as a cloth—
Is not its form—its voice—most palpable and loud? †

But what is this?—it cometh—and it brings
A music with it—'tis the rush of wings—
A pause—and then a sweeping, falling strain
And Nesace is in her halls again.
From the wild energy of wanton haste
Her cheeks were flushing, and her lips apart;
And zone that clung around her gentle waist
Had burst beneath the heaving of her heart.
Within the center of that hall to breathe
She paus'd and panted, Zanthe! all beneath,
The fairy light that kiss'd her golden hair
And long'd to rest, yet could but sparkle there!

Saba, Nau, Maundrell, Troilo, D'Arvieux] that after an excessive drought the vestiges of columns, walls, etc., are seen above the surface. At *any* season, such remains may be discovered by looking down into the transparent lake, and at such distances as would argue the existence of many settlements in the space now usurped by the "Asphaltites."

* Eyraco—Chaldea.

† I have often thought I could distinctly hear the sound of the darkness as it stole over the horizon.

Young flowers were whispering in melody *
To happy flowers that night—and tree to tree;
Fountains were gushing music as they fell
In many a star-lit grove, or moon-lit dell;
Yet silence came upon material things—
Fair flowers, bright waterfalls and angel wings—
And sound alone that from the spirit sprang
Bore burthen to the charm the maiden sang:

"'Neath blue-bell or streamer—
Or tufted wild spray
That keeps, from the dreamer,
The moonbeam away—†
Bright beings! that ponder,
With half closing-eyes,
On the stars which your wonder
Hath drawn from the skies,
Till they glance thro' the shade, and
Come down to your brow
Like—eyes of the maiden
Who calls on you now.
Arise! from your dreaming
In violet bowers.
To duty beseeming
These star-litten hours—

* Fairies use flowers for their charactery.—*Merry Wives of Windsor.*

† In Scripture is this passage "The sun shall not harm thee by day, nor the moon by night." It is perhaps not generally known that the moon, in Egypt, has the effect of producing blindness to those who sleep with the face exposed to its rays, to which circumstance the passage evidently alludes.

And shake from your tresses
  Encumber'd with dew
The breath of those kisses
  That cumber them too
(O! how, without you, Love!
  Could angels be blest?)—
Those kisses of true love
  That lull'd ye to rest!
Up!—shake from your wing
  Each hindering thing:
The dew of the night—
  It would weigh down your flight;
And true love caresses—
  Oh! leave them apart:
They are light on the tresses,
  But lead on the heart.

"Ligeia! Ligeia!
  My beautiful one!
Whose harshest idea
  Will to melody run,
O! is it thy will
  On the breezes to toss?
Or, capriciously still,
  Like the lone Albatross,*
Incumbent on night
  (As she on the air)
To keep watch with delight
  On the harmony there?

"Ligeia! wherever
  Thy image may be,

* The Albatross is said to sleep on the wing.

No magic shall sever
  Thy music from thee.
Thou hast bound many eyes
  In a dreamy sleep—
But the strains still arise
  Which *thy* vigilance keep—
The sound of the rain
  Which leaps down to the flower,
And dances again
  In the rhythm of the shower—
The murmur that springs *
  From the growing of grass
Are the music of things—
  But are model'd, alas!—
Away, then, my dearest,
  O! hie thee away
To springs that lie clearest
  Beneath the moon-ray—
To lone lake that smiles,
  In its dream of deep rest,
At the many star-isles
  That enjewel its breast—
Where the wild flowers, creeping
  Have mingled their shade,
On its margin is sleeping
  Full many a maid—
Some have left the cool glade, and
  Have slept with the bee—†

* I met with this idea in an old English tale, which I am now unable to obtain and quote from memory:—"The verie essence and, as it were, springeheade and origine of all musiche is the verie pleasaunte sounde which the trees of the forest do make when they growe."

† The wild bee will not sleep in the shade if there be moonlight.

Arouse them, my maiden,
On moorland and lea—
Go! breathe on their slumber,
All softly in ear,
The musical number
They slumber'd to hear—
For what can awaken
An angel so soon
Whose sleep hath been taken
Beneath the cold moon
As the spell which no slumber
Of witchery may test,
The rhythmical number
Which lull'd him to rest?"

Spirits in wing, and angels to the view,
A thousand seraphs burst th' Empyrean thro,
Young dreams still hovering on their drowsy flight,
Seraphs in all but "Knowledge," the keen light
That fell, refracted, thro' thy bounds, afar,
O Death! from eye of God upon that star:
Sweet was that error—sweeter still that death—
Sweet was that error—ev'n with *us* the breath

The rhyme in this verse, as in one about sixty lines before, has an appearance of affectation. It is, however, imitated from Sir W. Scott, or rather from Claud Halero—in whose mouth I admired its effect:

O! were there an island,
Tho' ever so wild
Where woman might smile and
No man be beguil'd, etc.

Of Science dims the mirror of our joy—
To them 'twere the Simoom, and would destroy—
For what (to them) availeth it to know
That Truth is Falsehood—or that Bliss is Woe?
Sweet was their death—with them to die was rife
With the last ecstasy of satiate life—
Beyond that death no immortality—
But sleep that pondereth and is not "to be"—
And there—oh! may my weary spirit dwell—
Apart from Heaven's Eternity—and yet how far from Hell! *
What guilty spirit, in what shrubbery dim,
Heard not the stirring summons of that hymn?
But two: they fell—for Heaven no grace imparts
To those who hear not for their beating hearts.

* With the Arabians there is a medium between Heaven and Hell, where men suffer no punishment, but yet do not attain that tranquil and even happiness which they suppose to be characteristic of heavenly enjoyment.

Un no rompido sueno—
Un dia puro—allegre—libre
Quiera—
Libra de amor—de zelo—
De odio—de esperanza—de rezelo.—*Luis Ponce de Leon.*

Sorrow is not excluded from "Al Aaraaf," but it is that sorrow which the living love to cherish for the dead, and which, in some minds, resembles the delirium of opium. The passionate excitement of Love and the buoyancy of spirit attendant upon intoxication are its less holy pleasures—the price of which, to those souls who make choice of "Al Aaraaf" as their residence after life, its final death and annihilation.

A maiden-angel and her seraph-lover—
O! where (and ye may seek the wide skies over)
Was Love, the blind, near sober Duty known?
Unguided Love hath fallen—'mid "tears of perfect moan."*

He was a goodly spirit—he who fell;
A wanderer by mossy-mantled well—
A gazer on the lights that shine above—
A dreamer in the moonbeam by his love:
What wonder? for each star is eye-like there,
And looks so sweetly down on Beauty's hair;
And they, and ev'ry mossy spring were holy
To his love-haunted heart and melancholy.
The night had found (to him a night of woe)
Upon a mountain crag, young Angelo—
Beetling it bends athwart the solemn sky,
And scowls on starry worlds that down beneath it lie.
Here sate he with his love—his dark eye bent
With eagle gaze along the firmament:
Now turn'd it upon her—but ever then
It trembled to the orb of EARTH again.

"Ianthe, dearest, see! how dim that ray!
How lovely 'tis to look so far away!
She seem'd not thus upon that autumn eve
I left her gorgeous halls—nor mourn'd to leave.

* There be tears of perfect moan
Wept for thee in Helicon.—*Milton.*

That eve—that eve—I should remember
well—
The sun-ray dropp'd, in Lemnos, with a spell
On th' Arabesque carving of a gilded hall
Wherein I sate, and on the draperied wall—
And on my eyelids—O the heavy light!
How drowsily it weigh'd them into night!
On flowers, before, and mist, and love they ran
With Persian Saadi in his Gulistan:
But O that light!—I slumber'd—Death, the
while,
Stole o'er my senses in that lovely isle
So softly that no single silken hair
Awoke that slept—or knew that he was there.

"The last spot of Earth's orb I trod upon
Was a proud temple call'd the Parthenon.*
More beauty clung around her column'd wall
Than ev'n thy glowing bosoms beats withal,†
And when old Time my wing did disenthral—
Thence sprang I—as the eagle from his tower,
And years I left behind me in an hour.
What time upon her airy bounds I hung,
One half the garden of her globe was flung.
Unrolling as a chart unto my view—
Tenantless cities of the desert too!
Ianthe, beauty crowded on me then,
And half I wish'd to be again of men."

* It was entire in 1687—the most elevated spot in Athens.

† Shadowing more beauty in their airy brows
Than have the white breasts of the Queen of Love.
—*Marlowe.*

"My Angelo! and why of them to be?
A brighter dwelling-place is here for thee,
And greener fields than in yon world above,
And woman's loveliness—and passionate love."

"But, list, Ianthe! when the air so soft
Fail'd, as my pennon'd * spirit leapt aloft,
Perhaps my brain grew dizzy—but the world
I left so late was into chaos hurl'd—
Sprang from her station, on the winds apart,
And roll'd, a flame, the fiery Heaven athwart.
Methought, my sweet one, then I ceased to soar
And fell—not swiftly as I rose before,
But with a downward, tremulous motion thro'
Light, brazen rays, this golden star unto!
Nor long the measure of my falling hours,
For nearest of all stars was thine to ours—
Dread star! that came, amid a night of mirth
A red Dædalion on the timid Earth.

"We came—and to thy Earth—but not to us
Be given our lady's bidding to discuss:
We came, my love; around, above, below,
Gay fire-fly of the night we come and go,
Nor ask a reason save the angel-nod
*She* grants to us, as granted by her God—
But, Angelo, than thine gray Time unfurl'd
Never his fairy wing o'er fairier world!
Dim was its little disk, and angel eyes
Alone could see the phantom in the skies.
When first Al Aaraaf knew her course to be
Headlong thitherward o'er the starry sea—

* Pennon—for pinion.—*Milton.*

But when its glory swell'd upon the sky,
As glowing Beauty's bust beneath man's eye,
We paus'd before the heritage of men,
And thy star trembled—as doth Beauty then!"
Thus, in discourse, the lovers whiled away
The night that waned and waned and brought
no day,
They fell: for Heaven to them no hope imparts
Who hear not for the beating of their hearts.

## TO THE RIVER ——.

Fair river! in thy bright, clear flow
Of crystal, wandering water,
Thou art an emblem of the glow
Of beauty—the unhidden heart—
The playful maziness of art
In old Alberto's daughter;

But when within thy wave she looks—
Which glistens then, and trembles—
Why, then, the prettiest of books
Her worshiper resembles;
For in his heart, as in thy stream,
Her image deeply lies—
His heart which trembles at the beam
Of her soul-searching eyes.

## TAMERLANE.

Kind solace in a dying hour!
Such, father, is not (now) my theme—
I will not madly deem that power
Of Earth may shrive me of the sin
Unearthly pride hath revel'd in—
I have no time to dote or dream:
You call it hope—that fire of fire!
It is but agony of desire:
If I *can* hope—Oh God! I can—
Its fount is holier—more divine—
I would not call thee fool, old man,
But such is not a gift of thine.

Know thou the secret of a spirit
Bow'd from its wild pride into shame.
O yearning heart! I did inherit
Thy withering portion with the fame,
The searing glory which hath shone
Amid the Jewels of my throne,
Halo of Hell! and with a pain
Not Hell shall make me fear again—
O craving heart, for the lost flowers
And sunshine of my summer hours!
The undying voice of that dead time,
With its interminable chime,
Rings, in the spirit of a spell,
Upon thy emptiness—a knell.

I have not always been as now:
The fever'd diadem on my brow
  I claim'd and won usurpingly—
Hath not the same fierce heirdom given
  Rome to the Cæsar—this to me?
    The heritage of a kingly mind,
And a proud spirit which hath striven
      Triumphantly with human kind.

On mountain soil I first drew life:
  The mists of the Taglay have shed
  Nightly their dews upon my head,
And, I believe, the winged strife
And tumult of the headlong air
Have nestled in my very hair.

So late from Heaven—that dew—it fell
  ('Mid dreams of an unholy night)
Upon me with the touch of Hell,
  While the red flashing of the light
From clouds that hung, like banners, o'er,
  Appeared to my half-closing eye
  The pageantry of monarchy,
And the deep trumpet-thunder's roar
Came hurriedly upon me, telling
  Of human battle, where my voice,
My own voice, silly child!—was swelling
  (O! how my spirit would rejoice,
And leap within me at the cry)
The battle-cry of Victory!

The rain came down upon my head
  Unshelter'd—and the heavy wind
  Rendered me mad and deaf and blind.

It was but man, I thought, who shed
Laurels upon me: and the rush—
The torrent of the chilly air
Gurgled within my ear the crush
Of empires—with the captive's prayer—
The hum of suitors—and the tone
Of flattery 'round a sovereign's throne.

My passions, from that hapless hour,
Usurp'd a tyranny which men
Have deem'd, since I have reach'd to power,
My innate nature—be it so:
But, father, there liv'd one who, then,
Then—in my boyhood—when their fire
Burn'd with a still intenser glow
(For passion must, with youth, expire)
E'en *then* who knew this iron heart
In woman's weakness had a part.

I have no words—alas!—to tell
The loveliness of loving well!
Nor would I now attempt to trace
The more than beauty of a face
Whose lineaments, upon my mind,
Are——shadows on th' unstable wind:
Thus I remember having dwelt
Some page of early lore upon,
With loitering eye, till I have felt
The letters—with their meaning—melt
To fantasies—with none.

O, she was worthy of all love!
Love—as in infancy was mine—

'Twas such as angel minds above
Might envy; her young heart the shrine
On which my every hope and thought
Were incense—then a goodly gift,
For they were childish and upright—
Pure——as her young example taught:
Why did I leave it, and, adrift,
Trust to the fire within, for light?

We grew in age—and love—together—
Roaming the forest, and the wild;
My breast her shield in wintry weather—
And, when the friendly sunshine smil'd
And she would mark the opening skies,
*I* saw no Heaven—but in her eyes.
Young Love's first lesson is——the heart:
For 'mid that sunshine, and those smiles,
When, from our little cares apart,
And laughing at her girlish wiles,
I'd throw me on her throbbing breast,
And pour my spirit out in tears—
There was no need to speak the rest—
No need to quiet any fears
Of her—who asked no reason why,
But turn'd on me her quiet eye!

Yet *more* than worthy of the love
My spirit struggled with, and strove,
When, on the mountain peak, alone,
Ambition lent it a new tone—
I had no being—but in thee:
The world, and all it did contain
In the earth—the air—the sea—

Its joy—its little lot of pain
That was new pleasure——the ideal,
Dim, vanities of dreams by night—
And dimmer nothings which were real—
(Shadows—and a more shadowy light!)
Parted upon their misty wings,
And, so, confusedly, became
Thine image and—a name—a name!
Two separate—yet most intimate things.

I was ambitious—have you known
The passion, father? You have not:
A cottager, I mark'd a throne
Of half the world as all my own,
And murmur'd at such lowly lot—
But, just like any other dream,
Upon the vapor of the dew
My own had past, did not the beam
Of beauty which did while it thro'
The minute—the hour—the day—oppress
My mind with double loveliness.

We walk'd together on the crown
Of a high mountain which look'd down
Afar from its proud natural towers
Of rock and forest, on the hills—
The dwindled hills! begirt with bowers
And shouting with a thousand rills.

I spoke to her of power and pride,
But mystically—in such guise
That she might deem it nought beside
The moment's converse; in her eyes

I read, perhaps too carelessly—
A mingled feeling with my own—
The flush on her bright cheek, to me
Seem'd to become a queenly throne
Too well that I should let it be
Light in the wilderness alone.

I wrapp'd myself in grandeur then
And donn'd a visionary crown—
Yet it was not that Fantasy
Had thrown her mantle over me—
But that, among the rabble—men,
Lion ambition is chain'd down—
And crouches to a keeper's hand—
Not so in deserts where the grand—
The wild—the terrible conspire
With their own breath to fan his fire.

Look 'round thee now on Samarcand!—
Is she not queen of Earth? her pride
Above all cities? in her hand
Their destinies? in all beside
Of glory which the world hath known
Stands she not nobly and alone?
Falling—her veriest stepping-stone
Shall form the pedestal of a throne—
And who her sovereign? Timour—he
Whom the astonished people saw
Striding o'er empires haughtily
A diadem'd outlaw!

O, human love! thou spirit given,
On Earth, of all we hope in Heaven!

Which fall'st into the soul like rain
Upon the Siroc-wither'd plain,
And, falling in thy power to bless,
But leav'st the heart a wilderness!
Idea! which bindest life around
With music of so strange a sound
And beauty of so wild a birth—
Farewell! for I have won the Earth.

When Hope, the eagle that tower'd, could see
No cliff beyond him in the sky,
His pinions were bent droopingly—
And homeward turn'd his soften'd eye.
'Twas sunset: when the sun will part
There comes a sullenness of heart
To him who still would look upon
The glory of the summer sun.
That soul will hate the ev'ning mist
So often lovely, and will list
To the sound of the coming darkness (known
To those whose spirits hearken) as one
Who, in a dream of night, *would* fly
But *cannot* from a danger nigh.

What tho' the moon—the white moon
Shed all the splendor of her noon,
*Her* smile is chilly—and *her* beam,
In that time of dreariness, will seem
(So like you gather in your breath)
A portrait taken after death.
And boyhood is a summer sun
Whose waning is the dreariest one—

For all we live to know is known
And all we seek to keep hath flown—
Let life, then, as the day-flower, fall
With the noon-day beauty—which is all.

I reach'd my home—my home no more—
For all had flown who made it so.
I pass'd from out its mossy door,
And, tho' my tread was soft and low,
A voice came from the threshold stone
Of one whom I had earlier known—
O, I defy thee, Hell, to show
On beds of fire that burn below,
An humbler heart—a deeper woe.

Father, I firmly do believe—
I *know*—for Death who comes for me
From regions of the blest afar,
Where there is nothing to deceive,
Hath left his iron gate ajar,
And rays of truth you cannot see
Are flashing thro' Eternity—
I do believe that Eblis hath
A snare in every human path—
Else how, when in the holy grove
I wandered, of the idol, Love,
Who daily scents his snowy wings
With incense of burnt offerings
From the most unpolluted things,
Whose pleasant bowers are yet so riven
Above with trellis'd rays from Heaven
No mote may shun—no tiniest fly—
The light'ning of his eagle eye—

How was it that Ambition crept,
Unseen, amid the revels there,
Till growing bold, he laughed and leapt
In the tangles of Love's very hair?

## TO ——.

THE bowers whereat, in dreams, I see
The wantonest singing birds,
Are lips—and all thy melody
Of lip-begotten words—

ine eyes, in Heaven of heart enshrined
Then desolately fall,
God! on my funereal mind
Like starlight on a pall—

hy heart—*thy* heart!—I wake and sigh,
And sleep to dream till day
Of the truth that gold can never buy—
Of the baubles that it may.

## A DREAM.

IN visions of the dark night
I have dreamed of joy departed—
But a waking dream of life and light
Hath left me broken-hearted.

Ah! what is not a dream by day
To him whose eyes are cast
On things around him with a ray
Turned back upon the past?

That holy dream—that holy dream,
While all the world were chiding,
Hath cheered me as a lovely beam
A lonely spirit guiding.

What though that light, thro' storm and night,
So trembled from afar—
What could there be more purely bright
In Truth's day-star?

## ROMANCE.

Romance, who loves to nod and sing,
With drowsy head and folded wing,
Among the green leaves as they shake
Far down within some shadowy lake,
To me a painted paroquet
Hath been—a most familiar bird—
Taught me my alphabet to say—
To lisp my very earliest word,
While to the wild wood I did lie,
A child—with a most knowing eye.

Of late, eternal Condor years
So shake the very Heaven on high
With tumult as they thunder by,

I have no time for idle cares
Through gazing on the unquiet sky.
And when an hour with calmer wings
Its down upon my spirit flings—
That little time with lyre and rhyme
To while away—forbidden things!
My heart would feel to be a crime
Unless it trembled with the strings.

## FAIRYLAND.

Dim vales—and shadowy floods—
And cloudy-looking woods,
Whose forms we can't discover
For the tears that drip all over;
Huge moons there wax and wane—
Again—again—again—
Every moment of the night
Forever changing places,
And they put out the star-light
With the breath from their pale faces.
About twelve by the moon-dial
One more filmy than the rest
(A kind which, upon trial,
They have found to be the best)
Comes down—still down—and down
With its center on the crown
Of a mountain's eminence,
While its wide circumference
In easy drapery falls
Over hamlets, over halls,

Wherever they may be
O'er the strange woods—o'er the sea—
Over spirits on the wing—
Over every drowsy thing—
And buries them up quite
In a labyrinth of light—
And then, how deep!—O, deep
Is the passion of their sleep.
In the morning they arise,
And their moony covering
Is soaring in the skies.
With the tempests as they toss
Like——almost any thing—
Or a yellow Albatross.
They use that moon no more
For the same end as before
Videlicet a tent—
Which I think extravagant:
Its atomies, however,
Into a shower dissever,
Of which those butterflies
Of Earth, who seek the skies,
And so come down again
(Never-contented things!)
Have brought a specimen
Upon their quivering wings.

## THE LAKE.

TO ——.

In spring of youth it was my lot
To haunt of the wide world a spot
The which I could not love the less—
So lovely was the loneliness
Of a wild lake, with black rock bound,
And the tall pines that towered around,
But when the Night had thrown her pall
Upon that spot, as upon all,
And the mystic wind went by
Murmuring in melody—
Then—ah, then, I would awake
To the terror of a lone lake.

Yet the terror was not fright,
But a tremulous delight—
A feeling not the jeweled mine
Could teach or bribe me to define—
Nor love—although the Love were thine.

Death was in that poisonous wave,
And in its gulf a fitting grave
For him who thence could solace bring
To his lone imagining
Whose solitary soul could make
An Eden of that dim lake.

## SONG.

I saw thee on thy bridal day
When a burning blush came o'er thee,
Though happiness around thee lay,
The world all love before thee:

And in thine eye a kindling light
(Whatever it might be)
Was all on Earth my aching sight
Of Loveliness could see.

That blush, perhaps, was maiden shame—
As such it well may pass—
Though its glow hath raised a fiercer flame
In the breast of him, alas!

Who saw thee on that bridal day,
When that deep blush *would* come o'er thee,
Though happiness around thee lay.
The world all love before thee.

## TO M. L. S. ——.

Of all who hail thy presence as the morning—
Of all to whom thine absence is the night—
The blotting utterly from out high heaven
The sacred sun—of all who, weeping, bless thee
Hourly for hope—for life—ah! above all,
For the resurrection of deep-buried faith
In Truth—in Virtue—in Humanity—
Of all who, on Despair's unhallowed bed
Lying down to die, have suddenly arisen
At thy soft-murmured words, "Let there be light!"
At the soft-murmured words that were fulfilled
In the seraphic glancing of thine eyes—
Of all who owe thee most—whose gratitude
Nearest resembles worship—oh, remember
The truest—the most fervently devoted,
And think that these weak lines are written by him—
By him who, as he pens them, thrills to think
His spirit is communing with an angel's.

## SPIRIT OF THE DEAD.

Thy soul shall find itself alone
'Mid dark thoughts of the gray tombstone—
Not one, of all the crowd, to pry
Into thine hour of secrecy.

Be silent in thy solitude
  Which is not loneliness—for then
The spirits of the dead who stood
  In life before thee are again
In death around thee—and their will
Shall overshadow thee: be still,

The night—tho' clear—shall frown—
And the stars shall not look down
From their high thrones in the Heaven,
With light like Hope to mortals given—
But their red orbs, without beam,
To thy weariness shall seem
As a burning and a fever
Which would cling to thee forever.

Now are thoughts thou shalt not banish—
Now are visions ne'er to vanish—
From thy spirit shall they pass
No more—like dew-drops from the grass.

The breeze—the breath of God—is still—
And the mist upon the hill
Shadowy—shadowy—yet unbroken,
Is a symbol and a token—
How it hangs upon the trees,
A mystery of mysteries!

reached his 17th year. Has Russell Lowell says these lines have a grace & symmetry of outline such as few poets ever attain, & they are valuable as displaying "what can only be expressed by contradictory phrase, innate experience."
"his exquisite stanzas."



## TO HELEN. see page 13 - Memoir.

Helen, thy beauty is to me
Like those Nicean barks of yore,
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
The weary, way-worn wanderer bore
To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs have brought me home
To the glory that was Greece
And the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo! in yon brilliant window-niche
How statue-like I see thee stand!
The agate lamp within thy hand,
Ah! Pysche, from the regions which
Are Holy Land!

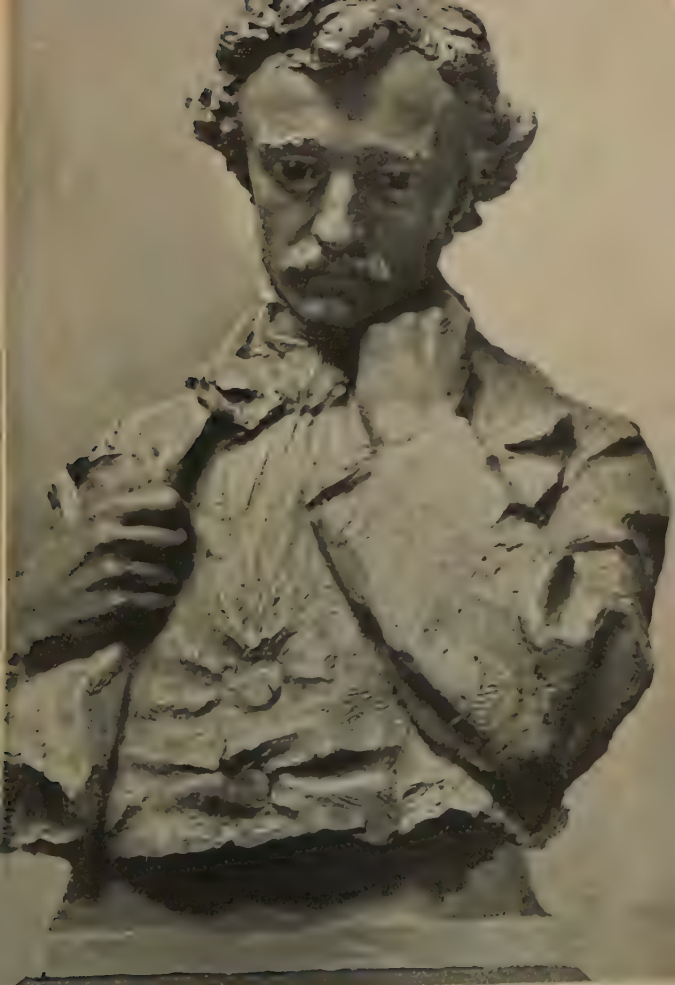
## ALONE.

From childhood's hour I have not been
As others were—I have not seen
As others saw—I could not bring
My passions from a common spring.
From the same source I have not taken

My sorrow; I could not awaken
My heart to joy at the same tone;
And all I lov'd, *I* lov'd alone.
*Then*—in my childhood—in the dawn
Of a most stormy life was drawn—
From ev'ry depth of good and ill
The mystery which binds me still:
From the torrent, or the fountain,
From the red cliff of the mountain,
From the sun that 'round me roll'd
In its autumn tint of gold—
From the lightning in the sky
As it pass'd me flying by—
From the thunder and the storm,
And the cloud that took the form
(When the rest of Heaven was blue)
Of a demon in my view.

"Edgar Allan Poe was no drunkard, not even a habitual drinker, but he was easily tempted and, when yielding, was easily overcome by intoxicants. The story of his life is not one of vice but of a pathetic struggle against it." These words, spoken by Dr. Charles W. Kent, professor of English at the University of Virginia, were the inspiration for the portrait bust of Poe lately modeled by George Julian Zolnay, the Hungarian American sculptor, which, cast in bronze, is to adorn the rotunda in the university's library.

The rugged, world worn features are ruthlessly portrayed, but in the deep set eyes is seen the desperate struggle with fate and circumstance.



PORTRAIT BUST OF EDGAR ALLAN POE, FROM THE BUST MODELED BY GEORGE JULIAN ZOLNAY, FOR THE LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA.

"It has been the fate of few writers to have been so vehemently discussed as Poe. His life has been a battleground for his biographers. There is scarcely a fact in any one of the books that have been written about his career that is not emphatically denied in another.

"This is undoubtedly due to the great difference of opinion which has existed as to the cause of his erratic life, morbid temperament, and what have been called his drunken excesses."

Poe's infirmity was evidenced as a schoolboy. He was at times possessed by furious maddening storms and uncontrollable impulses; and the helpless poet, mentally alienated, sought rest and oblivion in alcohol. Friends, or responsibility for self—all were forgotten. After the attacks the memory of acts, words, time, was a dismal blank, and fear, introspection and despair were all that remained. Upon the complete return to sanity, however, the real self was asserted in the refined, gentlemanly, conscientious Poe. The psychologist, Dr. Goudiss affirms, easily understands the reason for Poe's intense terror and his constant dwelling upon the aspect of physical decay. "He lived alternately a life of obsessions and lucidity; and this duality is the cause of his being so shamefully misunderstood, so highly praised, so cruelly blamed."

In the light of these facts, the closing scene of the poet's life, as portrayed in the same issue of *The Book News Monthly* by Joseph Lewis French, assumes an altered significance. According to the statements of his friends, Poe was sober and entirely cheerful to the last when he left them on a journey to Baltimore. When he reached that city, however, the nether side of his nature must have asserted itself It so happened that it was the eve of election day and the poet, drunk or insane, was carried off by "heelers" who were after-

sep '94
" 156,7

wards identified, and was "cooped," as the term was then: literally confined in the back yard of a place made for that purpose. The next day, Mr. French informs us, he was given drugs to restore his faculties, and was taken to different polling places, in each of which, partly at the will of his captors undoubtedly, partly on his own initiative—regarding the whole affair as more or less of a huge joke—he cast a vote. There was no registration law in those days in Baltimore, and any man who could face a "challenge" at the poll and who was willing to take the oath there could cast a ballot. It was a common custom to capture strangers for the purpose of compelling them to vote, very much as sailors were "pressed" in the time of Queen Anne and King George, after first being plied with liquor. Had the poet fallen into kindlier hands in the intervals of obsession, the course of American literature might have been materially changed. Under the circumstances, he was in the power of fiends who, after using the irresponsible sick man for their purposes, robbed and deserted him. The consequence of this treatment and the drink urged upon him was his premature death, the most dreadful in the history of letters. "François Villon," exclaims Mr. French, "disappeared into the night of time after the career of a desperate criminal. His end can only be conjectured fearfully. But in Poe's case every ray that the twin lamps of circumstance and judgment can bring to bear upon the scene only serves to strengthen the plain testimony of his friend and physician."

"It was not a record written for the eyes of relatives and friends. It was not a defense. It was the statement of a scientific man. As to the scenes in the hospital, it is best to draw a veil

over what can but too plainly be read between the lines of current account. He was at first unconscious—sleeping at once the sleep of exhaustion and of death. To this succeeded spells of delirium, constant talking with spectral and imaginary objects on the walls, during which 'his face was pale and his whole person drenched in perspiration,' which was not wholly subdued till the second day after his admission. 'In the interval of lucidity which followed,' says Dr. Moran, physician in charge of the hospital, 'I endeavored to cheer him, but he broke out with an imprecation that "the best thing his best friend could do would be to take a pistol and blow out his brains." Shortly after giving expression to these words Mr. Poe seemed to doze, and I left him for a short time. When I returned I found him in a violent delirium, resisting the efforts of two nurses to keep him in bed. This state continued until Saturday evening, when he commenced calling for one 'Reynolds,' which he did through the night until three on Sunday morning. At this time a very decided change began to affect him. Having become exhausted from exertion he became quiet, and seemed to rest for a short time. Then gently moving his head, he said, 'Lord help my poor soul!' and expired."

Thus ended the career of America's greatest lyric poet in whose brain dwelled side by side, the angel Israfel, whose "heart strings are a lute," and the demon of drink. Both have left their impress on his life and on his art. The one brought about his lamentable death, the other has made him immortal.

**Weiss,** Susan Archer. The Home Life of Poe. 12mo. pp. 229. New York: Broadway Publishing Co.

Mrs. Weiss does not aim to whitewash any one. Her interest is that of a truth-seeker. One feels this from the first page to the last. She knew Poe in his last years, her home having been in Richmond, and she has been well acquainted with many other persons who knew him and were familiar with the circumstances of his private life. The sympathies which

belong to her as a woman are held in restraint by unusual clearness of insight and soundness of understanding. While she nowhere impresses one as having sought to rehabilitate Poe's character, the volume at the same time materially serves a purpose in that direction.

As to Poe's habits in drinking she makes it more clear than has any other writer that drinking was not with him by any means an habitual custom. He had the misfortune to possess, as some one, quoted by Mrs. Weiss, has remarked, "The weakest head of any man I ever knew," but his indulgences were occasional rather than habitual, and he had the further misfortune in early life to live with people with whom drinking was an every-day affair. . The refinement of the man's nature, his distinction of manner, and a certain exclusiveness of bearing which imprest most observers, and notably imprest women, are insisted upon.

The special point made by Mrs. Weiss, however, and one which, we believe, no other writer has made before, is that Poe's marriage had an unfortunate influence upon his whole career. She does not mean that it was an unhappy marriage; on the contrary, Poe was devoted to his wife, and she to him, this devotion existing also between Poe and his mother-in-law; but the woman whom he married was a mere child of only twelve or thirteen years when the marriage occurred, and altho she lived until twenty-four, she always remained a child.

While Poe seems never to have realized what he failed to get on the score of real companionship, Mrs. Weiss insists that his character was such that a woman of stronger personality and more robust mind, one who, in fact, might have led and steadied him, ought to have been his wife, rather than Virginia Clemm, who "re-

tained to the last the shy sweetness and simplicity of childhood." Mrs. Weiss says Virginia's mother deliberately made the match, and that among those who had known the family with anything like intimacy a general prejudice existed against her on this account. Mrs. Clemm "possest over Poe, who was her nephew, then and always, the influence and authority of a strong and determined will over a very weak one." In her concluding chapter Mrs. Weiss says the dominant trait of Poe's character was "weakness of will." But he was not by nature "inclined to evil, but the contrary."

The one impression which survives a reading of Mrs. Weiss's book is not unlike that which most discriminating readers have derived from other lives of Poe. This is that Poe was quite as much sinned against as sinning, and that the strangely contrasting, conflicting, and distorting circumstances of his life had everything to do with his moral failures.

"For doubt and darkness o'er thy head
Forever waved their condor wings."

Sarah Helen Whitman
the "One Women"
in Poe's life